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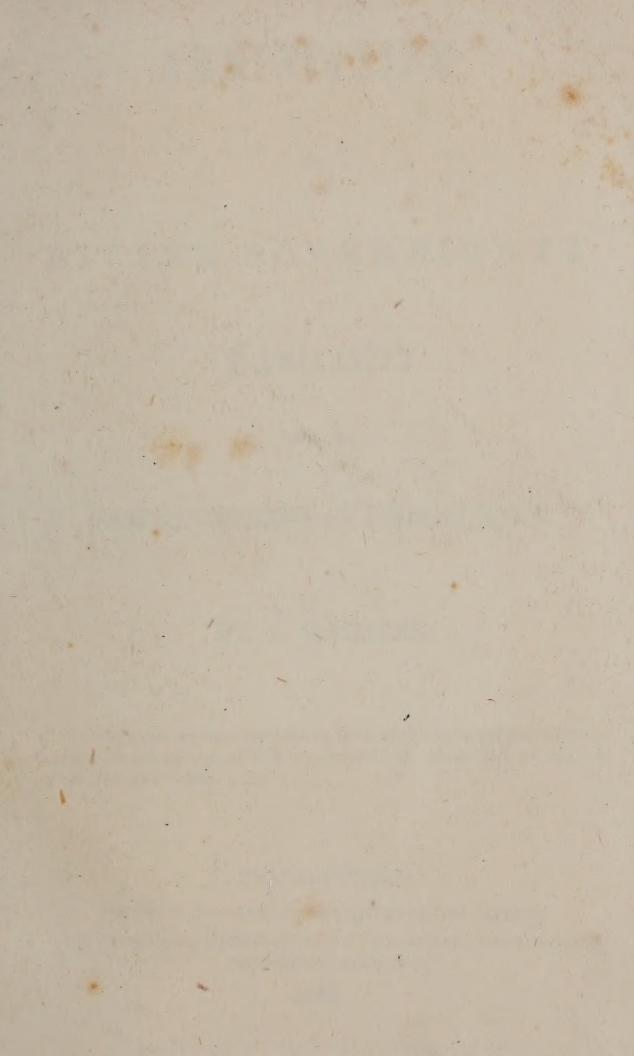
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Arminianism





THE

DIVINE

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

AND

THE

OF THE

ARMINIANISM;

OR,

DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

Contrasted

WITH THE

ARMINIAN DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION.

✓
BY C. WEBSTER.

“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”—EPH. I. 11.

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PREFACE.

ARMINIANISM is the religion of nature. It is an effort of nature to put on Christ; an attempt to conform Christ to nature. But Christ was manifest in the flesh to conform nature to himself. The Calvinist rejoices in the anticipation of that day when he shall see Christ as he is in his glory, and be like him. The Arminian believes, with natural men, that he is already so nearly like Christ, that he can, by sufficient exertion of his own powers, with the assistance of that imaginary grace, which he supposes to be a common possession of all mankind, so nearly conform himself to Christ, that it would be unjust in God to exclude him from heaven. If this be so, it follows that all men are born Arminians.

The youthful reader, therefore, should guard his mind against the indulgence of uncharitable thoughts towards Arminians. They are like himself. And if there be any difference, God is *wholly* the author of that difference. Boast not. Be humble; be prayerful; be courteous to the most virulent of Arminians, as indeed to all men.

Admire the omnipotent grace of God, which not only overcame the Arminianism of your nature, but also overcomes both the nature and the instructions of many, who are found publicly maintaining the profession of that creed. The number of God's dear children found in these unfavourable circumstances can never be known till that day arrives, which shall declare all things, and make manifest the works of God towards mankind. But, although God can, and does constantly bring good out of evil, causing *all things* to work together for good to them who love him and are the called according to his purpose, and does give efficacy to his word, in their case, even when

that word is contradicted and blasphemed by human teachers, protecting and saving his vessels of mercy, when they dwell even where Satan has his seat,—yet, these glorious truths can never be any argument against the duty and necessity of exposing, and counteracting, by every lawful means in our power, the erroneous teachings of men. “Buy the truth and sell it not.” Because, the truth is more precious than rubies, or fine gold; and because, if these erroneous teachings of Arminians were permitted to circulate without molestation or opposition, the little truth that now remains among them, barely sufficient to render salvation possible, would be ultimately lost. And where NO VISION IS, the people perish.

From these remarks, my young readers will perceive, that I have not written against the persons of Arminians, nor against Dr. Hodgson personally. I hope to meet him with multitudes of his brethren in heaven. But I have written against the system of doctrine which he holds and

teaches, under the fullest, and firmest conviction, that it is not *revealed*, but *natural* religion: that its tendency *is*, and only *can be*, to Romanism, despotism, and atheism; all of which things are contained within, and constantly emanate from the bosom of Rome, to blight Christianity, and destroy mankind.

Finally, I dare not say of Arminians, nor even of atheists, as Dr. Hodgson has said of Calvinists, that their principles furnish “a complete justification of the worst conduct of the worst men that ever lived;” because the regard which atheists have for natural laws, often prevents them from doing many evil things.

With these remarks, this unpretending effort to disseminate the saving knowledge of God among men is committed to the providence of the Great Head of the Church, and to him be the glory of any salutary influence he may be pleased to accomplish through its instrumentality.

Philadelphia, April 14, 1855.

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ERRATA.

It seems that no precaution can prevent errors.

Page 21, line 24, *for* "has," *read* "had."

" 33, " 16, *for* "spoke," *read* "spake."

" 84, " 15, *for* "prohibit," *read* "permit."

Others have probably escaped us.

DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

TOWARDS the end of January last, a friend placed in the author's hands a small volume of one hundred and thirty-one pages, containing three discourses professing to be founded upon Eph. i. 11, which is inserted in the title page, and entitled "The Calvinistic Doctrine of Predestination Examined and Refuted." To this circumstance are the public indebted for the appearance of the present volume.

A very slight perusal of this performance, made it manifest that our author had selected his text, rather as a target against which to display his warlike skill, than as a light to guide his inquiries. He does not approach it as an humble learner would an acknowledged teacher, but assails it in as good earnest as ever did a confident polemic his antagonist, and with the happiest result. He has both examined and refuted it, and can now exclaim with the Roman warrior—*Veni, vidi, vici.*

To make his victory more certain, and more palatable to the generality of men, he begins by giving his text the ugly name of Calvinism, after the manner of a distinguished historical personage, who dressed the Christians in the skins of wild beasts, before casting them to the dogs. It is hoped none will complain of this mode of procedure. For it is the easiest and surest way to obtain a victory over an opponent. Never hear what an opponent *actually says*; but fasten upon him something said by another, in his defence, or a *consequence* of your own, which he totally disavows, and you need never fear a defeat. Besides, it would have disturbed the vague prejudices of many honest people, who imagine there is something divine and sacred in the Bible, had our author assailed his text in a direct manner.

If anything plausible can be invented, which contradicts the scriptures without *appearing* to do so, it is more safe and honourable, in the judgment of the world, and will always prove more successful than an open, direct assault. It brings to the mind the pleasing conviction that, after all, the Bible is not so bad a book as it seems to be at first sight; that it does not altogether ignore the excellencies, abilities, and interests of humanity; nor frown with such awful sternness upon the passions and peccadilloes of men, which they cannot help, as some cynical and melancholy persons have supposed; and that, after all, when the Apostle says:—

"God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," HE DOES NOT MEAN WHAT HE SAYS. He merely means that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, so far as he foreknew that the will of man would consent, and grant him the necessary permission. Surely men, who love the gratification of their own will, cannot fail to appreciate, as it deserves, the discovery, that the Apostle's words have a meaning directly opposite to that usually attached to them, by ordinary minds, who think that the Bible should regulate reason, and that it is unreasonable to set reason above its divine teachings.

It is true, this discovery is not original with our author. It was long since brought to light by John Wesley; and is no less valuable than Herschel's famous discovery of inhabitants in the moon, who, on account of their proximity to the sun, had lapels over their eyes. The importance, and even *necessity* of this discovery, to persons whose confidence in the perfectibility, or at least, recuperative powers of human nature, has never been shaken, cannot be fully appreciated. It enables them to indulge in hopeful and pleasing anticipations of a world regenerated and disenthralled from the terrific region of lust and war, and death, by the inherent power of its own virtue. It is the vital principle of that prevalent moral sentimentality and refined sensibility, which forgets the victim of wrong, and sympathizes only with the crimi-

nal, and regards the just punishment of guilty men with an abhorrence so intense, as to beget and foster the belief, that, if God, *in any one case*, withhold the secret influence of his power to rescue the criminal from deserved punishment; and also put forth that secret influence to rescue another criminal equally guilty, he MUST BE “the *author of sin*, the *principal*, the *plotter*, the *prime mover*, the RING-LEADER thereof,”—page 61.

An intelligent and candid examination of the conflicting systems of theology called *Arminian* and *Calvinistic*, will demonstrate that this is the *radical*, and only really important point of this renowned controversy, which has agitated the Christian world since the days of Pelagius and Augustine. And if this divine influence were withheld from one criminal, and put forth for the rescue of another, without a satisfaction to law, in behalf of him that is rescued, at least fully equivalent to the penalty inflicted upon him that suffers the righteous consequences of his crime, the Arminian side of this controversy would be established. But if men will persist, with the Bible in their hands, in their own speculations and reasonings upon these truths, which lie so far beyond the province of reason, that they can only be known by revelation; if they will virtually disregard the covenants with both the first and second Adam, together with their arrangements and consequences; and, with a most reckless confusion of ideas, refer things

to one of these covenants, which belong to the other; and then reason as if neither had an existence, and as though man had never sinned, it is not surprising to find them so snared by their own philosophy, that they ultimately land not only in Arminianism, but even atheism itself, as many have done.

If this were not so, they could never be reconciled to their disjointed, disconnected and contradictory dogmas. Revealed truth is a unit; but, "the legs of the lame are not equal; so is a parable in the mouth of fools." Prov. xxvi. 7. If there be such discrepancies and contradictions in the Bible, as Arminianism necessarily supposes, then it never came from God, and Christianity is no better than the fables of Paganism. Consequently, notwithstanding that the force of truth, and the mercy of God are such, that multitudes are brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, who are entangled in this wretched system, and in defiance of its malign influence; yet, whenever its fundamental dogma, that, if God, as the Holy Ghost every where testifies, "*works all things*" according to his own immutable purpose, the free agency and accountability of man are necessarily destroyed, is carried out, it always does, and necessarily must land in atheism. And even when this pernicious system is not carried to its fatal results, it hides from the mind the glory of God, the immutability of the divine law, the infinite opposition of sin and

holiness; blunts the moral sense; and places much of that confidence in an arm of flesh which belongs only to God, who is a rock, and whose work is perfect. Its constant tendency is to exalt pride on the one hand; or beget despondency on the other; and its native fruit is a vague, noisy, periodical, and spasmodic piety.

Even Dr. Hodgson, with all his penetration and sagacity, and he is no insignificant controversialist, runs into contradictions so palpable, that no one, with the slightest reflection, can fail to perceive them. He says, page 117, "Methodists never, so far as I know, seek to raise the slightest suspicion of the piety of their Calvinistic brethren *on the ground of their being Calvinists.*" Yet, we read, p. 100, that Calvinism "furnishes a complete justification of the worst conduct of the worst men that ever lived." This is not true of either Calvinism or Arminianism. If it were, neither party could be Christians any more than the Thugs of Hindostan. For the people of God "shall all be taught of God," John vi. 45; but God never taught his people doctrines that "furnish a complete justification of the worst conduct of the worst men that ever lived."

If the writer of this essay be not mistaken, Arminianism necessarily involves two consequences, which he does not charge upon Arminians, but upon their theory. *First*, Its logical consequence, when fully carried out, can lead to nothing less than Atheism. Do we then

regard Arminians as atheists? Certainly not. They abhor atheism no less sincerely than Calvinists; either because they do not perceive this logical consequence; or the force of truths which they do hold, accompanied with divine grace, neutralizes the pernicious influence which their theory would otherwise exert over the mind. Therefore, a *second* consequence necessarily follows the first, that no sinner can obtain salvation, so long as his mind is thoroughly imbued, and wholly influenced by Arminian principles. But, it is not supposed either that Arminians are atheists, or that none of the Lord's people are found among them. It is a CREED, not the men who hold it, that we shall attempt to prove both unchristian and atheistical. And pernicious as that creed is judged to be, it will not, any more than Calvinism does, furnish "a complete justification of the worst conduct of the worst men that ever lived." We cannot rail against Arminianism as Dr. Hodgson does against Calvinism. And no argument, external to the Bible, which can be drawn from the existence of acknowledged facts, can go further to prove the truth of Calvinistic predestination, than the fact that it is the originating cause of salvation to millions who deny its truth. They acknowledge a sufficient amount of divine truth to create in their minds an habitual dependence upon God, which they ignorantly contradict in their public profession; furnishing an example of the efficacious grace

of God in the salvation of his elect above, and, to a certain extent, even contrary to means. And if Arminians really believe one-half the consequences they charge upon Calvinism, they must also believe in the same sovereign, efficacious, and irresistible grace of God, or deny that a Calvinist can be a Christian.

CHAPTER II.

ANALYSIS OF DR. HODGSON'S BOOK.

§ 1. *The Doctor's definition of Predestination.*

HE firmly believes the doctrine of predestination, p. 14, and thus defines it, "Whom God foreknew, as repenting and believing, and availing themselves of remedial provisions, he 'predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son'—he hath chosen 'to be holy and without blame before him in love.'" P. 108. And the theory of predestination to which he objects, "Affirms that God has purposed, decreed, predetermined, foreordained, predestinated, whatsoever comes to pass, and that, in some way or other, he, by his providence, brings to pass whatever occurs." P. 15. We do not accept this as a definition of Calvinistic predestination. But if he had quoted the authorized definition en-

tire, it would have left no room for his book; it would have annihilated every argument he has brought forward against Calvinism. The entire definition runs thus—“*God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass*; yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.” (Westminster Confession, Chap. iii. sec. 1.) That the young and ignorant reader for whose benefit our author proposed to write, may be led to believe that his definition embraces entire that which is given by Calvinists, he not only substitutes “predestination,” for the word “*ordain*,” which the Confession uses in a general sense as embracing all the decrees of God, while Calvinists always restrict the word predestination to those who are chosen in Christ Jesus to salvation; but he quotes, (p. 26,) only that part of the definition which we have italicised, omitting all the rest! And all this is done after he has just said, (p. 24,) “I SHALL GIVE THEIR VIEWS IN THEIR OWN WORDS.” The matter runs thus:—C. says to A., “B. has lost all his property, except a legacy left him.” B. brings suit against C. for slander; A., the only witness, is called to the stand, he swears, “I heard C. say that B. had lost all his property. I give his own words.” Poor C. is convicted, yet innocent. The witness A. gives the very

words to the court, spoken by C., yet A. is a perjured man. And here lies the outrageous injustice of Arminians. The suppression of a portion of the truth may be, and often is, the most deadly form that falsehood can assume. This is constantly done by Arminian writers in the face of the reiterated definitions and remonstrances of Calvinists. Because they cannot reconcile in their own blinded minds, the *last*, with the *first* part of the Calvinistic definition, they perpetuate this standing calumny against their Calvinistic brethren. What can justify this conduct before honest men? Why impose upon your hearers and readers by using language which must necessarily deceive them? Why not permit Calvinists to tell their own story, or let them alone? If the second part of their definition be absurd and contradictory, why not prove it to be so? Or, at least, permit your readers and hearers to see the absurdity and contradiction, and judge for themselves? But concealment on this point, is the bulwark, the high tower of Arminianism; this is the rock of offence over which the multitude stumble into its dark abyss.

In view of this well-known fact, no one should be surprised that indignant expressions often escape the lips even of meek and humble Christians, nor that a scholar and a gentleman whose piety has never been questioned by those who know him, Dr. Fairchild, should say of every Arminian writer, who has yet put pen to paper,

in reference to the doctrine of predestination, "If men will publish the most wilful and deliberate untruths against us, as they certainly do, for no other offence than an honest difference of religious belief, what would they not do if their power were equal to their wickedness?"

This conclusion of Dr. F., natural to the minds of those who know the nature of Arminian perversions and cavils, should not be hastily adopted. It is not sustained by the real facts of the case. Arminians are as sincere and honest, according to their capacity, as Calvinists can be. They are not, at least generally, bitter against persons, nor other denominations. Nothing of this kind appears in Dr. Hodgson's book. He deals heavy blows with an unsparing hand against the most impregnable fortress of divine truth, under the honest conviction, that he is engaged in mortal combat with a deadly enemy. He verily thinks he ought to do many things contrary to this divine sovereignty. This is the reason why his book should be answered, and answered under the influence of the spirit of Christ. Nor, in saying this, do we undervalue either the mental capacity, or scholarship of Arminians. They stumble because they assume several fundamental principles as true, which are not so; all which rest upon the dogma—that the free, sovereign and eternal purpose of God concerning angels and men, cannot be absolute without annihilating their free agency.

1 whenever this principle is assumed as an

undeniable truth, it necessarily leads to all the horrid consequences pointed out by Arminian writers. Against this theory Calvinists wage an uncompromising war. And if we do not deal out heavier blows against it, than Dr. H. has against Calvinism, not as it is, but as he understands it, it will be owing not to any lack of good will, but want of ability. That these two theories, Calvinism and Arminianism, can never be reconciled, is evident to the common sense and reason of every man who permits himself to think; and their unceasing conflict, since the fall of man, ought to convince the most stupid that one or the other is destined to annihilation. The supposition that God can approve two conflicting systems, which mutually blaspheme each other, would indeed prove that God has two contradictory wills. If one of these systems be Christianity, the other cannot be. That pious persons are found in Arminian bodies is conceded; but Calvinists believe the salvation of a real Arminian at heart, dying such, to be an impossibility. It "cuts up humility at the very roots." And if Calvinistic writers have endorsed the piety of Arminians, they have spoken of individuals, who are better than their creed; or pandered to the morbid state of moral feeling, universal in the hearts of natural men; or, they have been ignorant of their own creed, and Arminians at heart. Calvinism recognises no such piety. It ignores as a specious pretence of man's wisdom that religion, which is, in any

degree, and in any of its parts, attainable by the exertions of the fallen creature's power; which flourishes only in the carnal heart,—fattens only in the grease of its own filthiness,—grows rank only in the miasma of its own putrefaction,—and shines only in the moral darkness that enshrouds a world over which the surging billows of divine wrath have been rolling for six thousand years,—and exalts even a guilty creature above the throne of God his Maker. It is wiser, and more becoming the real condition of men, to bring this system into the atmosphere of heaven; and permit “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God” to shine upon it, than to be employed in the work of mutually interchanging empty compliments to each others' blindness. “For there is one God and Father of all, who is *above all*, and through all, and in you all,” Eph. iv. 6. “For *of him*, and through him, and to him, *are all things*; to whom be glory for ever,” Rom. xi. 36. “There are many devices in man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand,” Prov. xix. 21. “There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the Lord,” xxi. 30. Therefore we say to Arminianism, come “to the law and to the testimony,” Is. viii. 20; “for thou hast said my doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes,” Job xi. 4.

§ 2. *The Doctor's Candour.*

Pages 23, 24, he refers to those charges of dishonesty so invariably preferred against Methodists by their opponents, not to "refute" them; but he adds—"I refer to them now to justify the special caution which I shall observe in presenting their tenets. They make it necessary for us to prove beyond the possibility of doubt that they hold the doctrines which we impute to them. I shall give their views in their own words." He then quotes, pages 24-50, from Calvin, The Westminster Confession and Catechisms, Shaw, Fisher's Catechism, Musgrave, Boardman, Chalmers, Presbyterian Quarterly Review, Barnes, Saybrook Platform, a Confession of Faith adopted by the Baptist Association, at Philadelphia, 1752, Baptist Catechism, Confession of Faith of the Dutch Reformed church, Lowry's Search of Truth, a writer in the *Presbyterian* of June 1853, the *Presbyterian Banner* of Nov. 5th, 1853, and Dr. Wilson.

A tolerable array of authorities for one man to *examine and refute* in a work about the size of the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism! But our author was fully competent to the task. The only thing in this Herculean work, to excite surprise, is the ease and facility with which it is accomplished. Any person capable of garbling and mutilating another's language can accomplish the same work with equal

facility, by adopting the same process; only be cautious and refer to your authorities in such a way that no one can find the garbled places, unless they read their books through from beginning to end, and most likely you will escape detection. Either give your author's name simply; or, if there should be numerous editions of the work you quote, give the volume and page of some antiquated edition out of print. For instance, if you quote the Confession, do not give chapter and section, but say page 15, and it may be your reader will find the garbled place referred to at page 38 of his own edition. Quote Calvin thus: "Whatever conceptions we form in our minds, they are directed by the *secret inspiration* of God." Institutes, vol. ii. p. 213. This is the way our author quotes him. By this method, if your reader should happen to possess Calvin's Institutes, which I presume is a rare thing among Arminians, and will take time to read the entire work, he may possibly find something like the mutilation you have made. After reading one volume of Calvin's Institutes, the following sentence was discovered, in book i. Chap. xviii. sec. 2, "Whatever we conceive in our minds is directed *to its end* by the secret inspiration of God." Some difference, surely, between Calvin's words and the quotation of Dr. H. The quotation necessarily implies that God is the author of sin; but Calvin's words imply no such doctrine, as the reader will readily perceive. God may direct

our thoughts to their *end*, or the effect they produce, and not be the author of the sinfulness which we impart to our own thoughts.

§ 3. *The General Conference.*

Both Calvin and the Confession are treated in the same manner in the Doctrinal Tracts published by the General Conference of the Methodist church. In those tracts, chap. iii. sec. 1st, of the Confession, is quoted precisely as it is in Dr. Hodgson's book, and the words "FOR THEIR SINS," are expunged from the 7th section of the same chapter, which makes that section teach that God ordains men to wrath without any reference to their sins. In a little book published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, under the title, "*What is Calvinism?*" numerous instances will be found of the same deception.

These things are indeed amazing to honest men. And the man who is not grieved by such things, under whatever party banner he may be found, cannot be under the influence of the Spirit of Christ. And while Arminians know that the principles of Calvinists are contained only in the authorized standards of their respective churches, their mutilations of Calvin and even *forgeries* in his name are horrible. See, *What is Calvinism?* pp. 20-25. Truly, they are the children of their father John Wesley, whose well known forgery will hardly be forgotten, while they continue to tread in his footsteps.

“‘The elect shall be saved, do what they will: the reprobate shall be damned do what they can. Witness my hand, A. T.’ Every word of this was a forgery of his own; and yet, he affixes the initials of Mr. Toplady’s name, with a ‘witness my hand,’ to make his readers believe that it was in reality Mr. T’s. language.” This forgery admits of no excuse.

Such, however, is that Arminian *morality* which is so grievously distressed on account of the licentious tendency of Calvinism! This is a fine joke at the expense of God’s glory and man’s dearest interests. This method of creating sectarian capital out of the ignorance and depravity of mankind, at the hazard of their souls, can never be relished by pious men.

In his second discourse our author favours us with an exposition of his text, Eph. i. 11, so peculiar, that it must be adverted to more distinctly than can be done in this analysis. This discourse is chiefly occupied with *thirty-one* horrid consequences of Calvinism. His third and concluding discourse commences by summing up his consequences, and concludes with the true Arminian theory of predestination, his definition of which is given in the first chapter. But as the contents of these discourses will be developed in the progress of this discussion, they need not be further noticed in this place.

CHAPTER III.

THE ELECTION OF GRACE.

§ 1. *General Principles.*

God wills and acts as freely in his sovereign purpose, and in the execution of that purpose, as if there were no creature-will under him; while the creature wills and acts as freely, within the limits of his capacity and opportunity, as if there were no sovereign will over him.

The first part of this proposition lies within the grasp of human reason: for, as God cannot deny his own being and perfections, so he cannot make a creature independent of his sovereign will, because he cannot undeify himself. And as God cannot denude himself of his essential dominion over the creature, so he cannot make a creature, not under the control of his sovereign will, because he cannot cease to be the King, the Lawgiver, the Judge of his creatures. This part of the proposition is established by reason, revelation, the providence of God, and the experience of mankind; and is admitted by every Arminian capable of comprehending its terms, in everything except its application to men and angels, who are known to be rational creatures, and the responsible

subjects of God's moral government. Its application to men is denied on the supposition of its inconsistency with man's freedom of will. And as this supposition is the real and only basis of Arminianism, its truth should be proved, or the system should be abandoned.

The second part of the proposition, that, notwithstanding the absolute sovereignty of the divine will, "the creature wills and acts as freely, within the limits of his capacity and opportunity, as if there were no sovereign will over him," is purely a matter of revelation. It is true, reason and experience concur with revelation in demonstrating the fundamental truth, that man is a free agent, but we are indebted *exclusively* to revelation for a knowledge of the FACT that this free agency of man is entirely consistent with God's sovereignty over it. Arminianism being a denial of this revealed truth, necessarily ranks itself with infidelity under the cloak of Christ. If this fact be not demonstrated in these pages, the reader should discard them.

§ 2. *The Sovereignty of God essential.*

The sovereignty of God is so essential to his being, perfections, and government, that, without it, neither could exist. If any thing exist, or can exist without an act of his sovereign will, his dominion is imperfect, and he may be dethroned; if any thing exist without his will, in regard to that thing, he is not its ruler; or,

he has suspended the functions of his government. If anything occur different from the *eternal* counsel of his will, he ceases to be immutable. If sin could come into existence without any kind of divine volition concerning it, God would be incapable of protecting either his justice or holiness against its encroachments, and could no longer be "glorious in holiness." If his sovereignty over both the sin and the sinner were not perfect, he could be neither "a just God, nor a Saviour;" for he could neither pardon nor punish the transgressor. Under the divine government, there are no sons of Zeruiah too hard for the ruler to control and punish. The conclusion, then, that absolute sovereignty is essential to the existence of the divine glory is no less certain, than is the fact that this glory is displayed in all the actings of that sovereignty.

The glory of God, or that discovery of the divine perfections which is made in the works of creation and providence, commonly called his declarative glory, is greatly obscured in the world; and often blasphemed by many whose opportunities to learn the will of God leave them inexcusable. Men not only wilfully shut their own eyes against this light of divine glory, but struggle to conceal it from the view of their fellow men. Holiness imparts to all divine attributes a splendour "above the brightness of the sun," which "no eye hath seen, nor can see." And it is only in the sovereign

actings of God that any degree of this glory can either be revealed to men, or understood by them, when revealed. And as the transgression of one precept involves a breach of the whole law, so a denial of divine sovereignty involves a denial of all the attributes of God, as these are displayed in his works. It is the *being* of God, and not the *existence* of the creatures that is necessary. If the existence of the creatures were necessary, there could be no God except the creatures. So there can be no alternative between divine sovereignty on the one hand, or atheism on the other. Therefore, we are shut up to the necessity of referring the existence of all creatures to the sovereign will and power of God. He willed, he spoke, and the things which were not, came at his call, as though they had been. This truth holds equally in regard to the *actions*, as to the existence of the creatures. If the creature act independently of God, he ceases to be a subject of God's moral government. If he act in any instance otherwise than in conformity to the sovereign will of God, he must in that instance be independent of God. If he act contrary to the divine will, or purpose, then God and the creature must exchange places. These plain truths lie clearly within the compass of human reason, and are illustrated in the works of providence.

§ 3. *Sovereignty in election the same as in creation.*

In the works of creation, "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and on earth, in the seas, and in all deep places." Ps. cxxxv. 6. "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev. iv. 11. So, in regard to the salvation of his people, God displays his sovereign "power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour." Rom. ix. 21. "Now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the work of thy hand." Is. xlv. 8. That which causes the believer to differ from a natural man, is as truly the workmanship of God, as the material world.

§ 4. *Sovereignty in election to the means of grace, the same as in general providence.*

"Fire, hail, snow, vapour, stormy wind, fulfil his word," Ps. cxlviii. 8. He causeth "it to rain on the earth where no man is." Job xxxviii. 26. "He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth; his word runneth very swiftly. He giveth snow like wool; he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels; who can stand before his cold? He sendeth out his word and melteth them; he causeth his wind to blow, and the waters flow." So, also, he displays the same sovereignty in sending the means

of salvation to his people. "He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them." Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20.

§ 5. *Sovereignty in reference to the covenants with Adam and Christ the same, notwithstanding the difference in the nature of those covenants.*

In the making of the covenant of works with Adam, the Lord God *commanded* the man. Gen. ii. 16. In the annexation of the positive precept, he commanded the man, v. 16, 17: also, in constituting Adam the covenant head of his posterity, he commanded the man. Rom. v. 12, 21. In upholding Adam in his transgression, so far as the power of volition and action was concerned, and in *permitting* him to act so far as his freedom of will, and the sinfulness of his act was concerned, we clearly perceive the same adorable and awful sovereignty. For "who hath enjoined him his way?" or who can say, "Thou hast wrought iniquity?" Job xxxvi. 23. So, also, in the covenant of grace with our Lord Jesus Christ. "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine *elect*, in whom my soul delighteth." Is. xlii. 1. "The Lord *SWARE*, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. vii. 21. Hence, he often refers to the fact that the Father had sent him, as his authority for executing the office of

Mediator. "So Christ glorified not himself to be made a High Priest." Heb. v. 5. Surely those persons who, being sinners, think they can glorify themselves, by "repenting and believing," so as to be chosen heirs of God, and joint heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ, are more to be pitied than censured. For as Adam was chosen of God to be the covenant head of his seed, so, also, was Christ chosen of God to be the covenant head of his seed. See the fifth chapter of Romans throughout.

§ 6. *Sovereignty, the same in regard to both angels and men.*

Holy angels possessed nothing in themselves that could secure them against the commission of sin. Dependence and sinless imperfection, such as limited power, and liability to change, are essential to the most perfect of the creatures, otherwise the creatures would be God. The standing of elect angels and redeemed men, is not secured by any inherent power in themselves. "Behold he put no trust in his servants, and his angels he charged with folly." Job iv. 18. Consult 1 Tim. v. 21; 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6. Therefore the standing and fall of both angels and men, can only be traced to divine sovereignty, withholding the necessary efficient influence from those who fell, and thus leaving them wholly to themselves; and exerting such influence in the case of those who stood. No law could bind him

to exert this influence. It was purely an act of sovereignty. And when these stupendous events occurred, they displayed and unfolded the “mystery of his will, which he purposed IN HIMSELF, according to his good pleasure.” Eph. i. 9. This is sufficient to account for the fall of both angels and men; and, also, for the election of some fallen men to salvation, and the rejection of others, both the parties being equally guilty; and the purpose of God in regard to both, as we shall see, in the progress of this discussion, proceeding upon principles of the most exact justice, accompanied with “remedial provisions” the most suitable, opportunities the most ample, calls the most earnest and affectionate, and forbearance the most amazing, in reference to the non-elect, who finally perish; and in all these things there is not the least coercion of will in either of the parties; nor the least efficient divine compulsion to sin in the case of the non-elect; but on the other hand, the most powerful appeals that can be made to rational creatures, are constantly addressed to them, and enforced by innumerable outward restraints of Divine Providence; all of which may be concentrated in the earnest and touching words of God by the prophet:—“As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” Ezek. xxxiii. 11. And yet, because God, who

can no more sin, than he can be made accountable to his creatures, did not see fit to put forth a *supernatural and controlling influence* over the free agency of those who perish, the moral atmosphere is darkened with horrid blasphemies against his sovereign purpose and holy government.

§ 7. *Sovereignty in the call of the Jews.*

God chose the Jews to be his peculiar people, not on account of any foreseen excellency in them, but “*to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.*” Deut. vii. 6. It was not on account of their *origin*; “Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite.” Ezekiel xvi. 3. Nor their *riches*; for they were paupers, Ezek. xvi. 5. Nor their *number*; for they were the fewest of all people, Deut. vii. 7. Nor their *wisdom*; for they were “a foolish people and unwise,” Deut. xxxii. 6. Nor their *knowledge* of God; for they worshipped not only the planets, but a brute beast, Jer. xlv. 17; Ex. xxxii. 4. Nor because God foreknew them, “as repenting, and believing and availing themselves of remedial provisions;” for God foresaw in them the reverse of all these things; “they are sottish children; to do good they have no knowledge.” Jer. iv. 22. But this national election of the Jews was typical of the election of the spiritual seed of the Lord Jesus Christ. For, as the overthrow of the Jewish nation had the appearance of defeating

both the purpose of God in the calling of the Jews, and the promises of God to that people; Paul repels the objection by saying, "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children." Rom. ix. 6, 7.

§ 8. *Sovereignty in election, the same as in the call of the Jews.*

"They which are the children of the flesh;" that is, of visible church privileges, to which they were chosen, "are not the children of God:" but "the children of the promise;" that is, those who are "chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blame before him in love," Eph. i. 4, "are counted for the seed." Rom. ix. 8. Thus, he proves that the promise of God was made good, notwithstanding the dispersion of the Jews, and that it could not be said "the word of God had taken none effect." Excellently to the purpose, on this point of the controversy between Calvinists and Arminians, are the words of the late Dr. Jamieson, of Edinburgh: "Paul shows that, all along; under the old dispensation, the national election to external privileges, was only a figure of a personal election to those which are inward; that the former was, as it were, the covering of the other, the cabinet, however precious in itself, that contained the more precious jewel. He therefore applies the history of Elias, as a proof of personal and

particular election. Rom. xi. 2, 5. The prophet imagined he was 'left alone' in the service of Jehovah. "But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself, seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal." Here we have an election of *individuals*, as distinguished from the nation in general; an election of a *certain* number, 'seven thousand men;' an election to *holiness*, for they made no compliances with idolatry; an election of *grace*, and terminating in *efficacious* power; for God claims the work as wholly his own; 'I have reserved:' and election *to the praise of the glory of his grace*, as the end; 'I have reserved to myself.' The apostle asserts that he taught no new doctrine; that when he affirmed a personal election, he affirmed no more than was taught by God himself, and exemplified in the history of Israel, in the days of Elias: '*Even so, then at this present time, also, there is a remnant, according to the election of grace.*' Thus it is evident, that the national election of Israel, to external privileges, *typified, terminated in*, nay, all along *included*, an election of persons to that saving grace of which these were only the means."

§ 9. *Predestination defined.*

The substance of the Spirit's testimony in the written word, on this all-important subject, may be summed up in the following words:—God,

before the foundation of the world, in the free exercise of his sovereign will, did, by an immutable decree, make choice of certain individuals to salvation in Christ, in preference to others; without any foresight of any kind of good in them, more than in others, for no good thing existed in them, more than in others; and yet so far as the non-elect were concerned in this decree, or predestination of the elect, it was simply and only an act of preterition, or a passing by them; or if you please, leaving them out of the number of the elect. Consequently, this purpose of God, as we shall see more clearly in passing along, infringed in no manner upon the legal rights and privileges of the non-elect, which belonged to them in common with those who were predestinated to life. This divine preterition is constantly confounded with reprobation or predestination to wrath. Whereas, preterition is purely a negative act, or purpose of the divine mind, not to act at all in reference to the non-elect. Therefore, it is inconceivable to right reason, that the purpose of God to do nothing whatever, should either be the cause of reprobation or any obstacle thrown in the way of the salvation of the non-elect, which had not a previous existence. Therefore, this act of *preterition* necessarily involved in the purpose of mercy to the elect, was purely sovereign, and for cause or causes known only to the divine mind; but the act of *reprobation* was

for sin, a cause well known to us. It was purely, and only the exercise of justice, inflicting condign punishment upon incorrigible transgressors. When will Arminians learn this truth, so clearly revealed in the Scriptures? See the next chapter.

If, however, this definition be exceptionable, we may adopt the 17th article of the celebrated *Thirty-nine Articles*, which Dr. H. has neither "examined nor refuted." A sad omission for Arminians. It will require the Dr.'s work to be done over again. The inquisitive reader may be curious to know the cause of this omission. But we are unable to give him any satisfaction on this point. It may be that because the 17th article having become almost, if not altogether obsolete among Episcopalians, it was judged discreet not to rouse the sleeping lion. For, although the Episcopal church has been characterized—"a church with a Calvinistic creed and an Arminian clergy," yet the surpassing excellency of that 17th article, renders it precious to Calvinists. A better definition of predestination, it is believed cannot be found in any human formula. We give it entire:—

"Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby, (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation, those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by

Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season: they through grace obey the calling: they be justified freely: they be made sons of God by adoption: they be made like the image of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works: and at length by God's mercy they attain to everlasting felicity.

“As the godly consideration of Predestination, and our election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh and their earthly members, and drawing up their mind to high and heavenly things, as well because it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation, to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God: so, for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's predestination, is a most dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation.

“Furthermore, we must receive God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth to us

in holy Scripture: And in our doings, that will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us in the Word of God."

§ 10. *Election the cause of the Christian's security.*

We read of the elect, that their names are "in the Lamb's book of life." Rev. xiii. 8. "Mine elect shall inherit it." Is. lxxv. 9. "For the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matt. xxiv. 22. "If it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." v. 24. Their election, not their "availing themselves of remedial provisions" secures them against fatal delusions. They were not elected because they used the means; but they used the means because they had been predestinated to salvation through the use of means. "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the *beginning* chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." 2 Thess. ii. 3. "I endure all things for the *elect's* sake." 2 Tim. ii. 10. "A remnant according to the *election of grace*." Rom. xi. 5. Not according to foreseen repentance, or faith, or use of means, but according to "the election of grace," the choice of God's sovereign, unmerited, unsought favour. "The election hath obtained it, the rest were blinded." Rom. ix. 7. "God hath chosen his people." Ps. cv. 6. But the wicked have "chosen their own ways." Ps. lxxvi. 3. "God hath chosen *foolish* things;" but

foreseen faith and repentance are not foolish things: "God hath chosen *weak* things;" but foreseen faith is not a weak thing, it conquers not only the world, but death and hell also: "God hath chosen *despised* things;" but "remedial provisions," are not despised things, if Arminians are permitted to judge: "God hath chosen things that *are not*;" but foreseen faith is far from being a nonentity with Arminians. According to them, it controls the will of God in their predestination to salvation; nay more, carries them triumphantly to heaven, over the head of divine sovereignty. Calvinism bows down with the profoundest reverence of which the human mind is capable, before the "glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD." Deut. xxviii. 58.

§ 11. *The Example of Jacob and Esau.*

This example is no less conclusive than that of the seven thousand whom God had reserved to himself in the days of the prophet Elijah. Rom. ix. 11-16. The Arminian gloss upon this place, that Paul refers *only* to the election of temporal blessings, can never stand. Besides, if their position could be proved, it would condemn them on their own testimony. Because election to temporal blessings involves all the consequences they ascribe to election to spiritual; and absurdly represents God as acting sovereignly in regard to the lesser, and yielding to the will of the creature in regard to the greater

blessing. So that according to their own showing their grievous charges against divine sovereignty roll over the head of Calvinism upon God himself.

It is true, the election of Jacob was to temporal privileges; and it is equally true, that it was also to saving and eternal blessings. And this election of Jacob to salvation was the principal thing intended by the apostle, in that place. Rom. ix. 7, the apostle draws a contrast between the literal seed of Abraham and the spiritual seed of Christ. "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called." In the eighth verse he declares, that the "seed of Abraham," of which he is speaking, are "the children of God." Those of Abraham's descendants who were elected to temporal privileges only, are "the children of the flesh," represented by Ishmael, (Gal. iv. 22;) and those who were elected both to temporal privileges, and to eternal salvation are "the seed of Abraham," and "the children of God," and were represented by Isaac. And then, to prove that the election of Jacob was of the same character, he adds, verse tenth, "AND NOT ONLY THIS;" that is, "not only this example of Isaac, but also the example of Jacob," were both intended to confirm the same truth, verse eleventh, "THAT THE PURPOSE OF GOD ACCORDING TO ELECTION MIGHT STAND," an immutable truth,

while sun and moon endure ; yea, eternally. For, "the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

If any plain, honest Christian should think that the foregoing explicit testimony of the Spirit can silence the cavils of Arminianism, he will be doomed to a sad disappointment. For it per-versely replies,—“Although the children, being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil,” the election of Jacob was on the ground of the foreknowledge of God. God foreknew Jacob, “as repenting and believing, availing himself of remedial provisions,” therefore, “he predestinated him to be conformed to the image of his Son.” For such, “he hath chosen to be holy and without blame before him in love.” A more direct contradiction of the apostle’s words could neither be given nor imagined, than is contained in this brief definition of Arminian predestination. Human language can make nothing more plain than does that used by the apostle, that he *designed to prove*, and *did prove* under the guidance of the Spirit of God, the mysterious and sublime truth, that God *elected Jacob to life, and passed by Esau*, leaving him altogether to himself, without the least reference whatever to any thing foreseen in either of them. God in his adorable sovereignty, disposed of Jacob ; but permitted Esau to exercise his own free will. So that while divine sovereignty has replenished heaven with its shining hosts, man’s free will has peopled hell with countless myriads.

Here is seen the wisdom of fallen man to do evil. The mighty achievement of man's freedom of will can never be comprehended, until the veil shall have been withdrawn that conceals the eternal world from mortal eyes. Of the non-elect God says: "They would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof; therefore, shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices." Prov. i. 30, 31. Consequently the appointment or foreordination of the non-elect to wrath was wholly on the ground of their refusal to obey the commands of God; not only because they were sinners, but especially because of the wilful rejection of every intimation of the will of God to them, whether in nature and providence, or the external revelation of the gospel, or the moral suasion of, or as it is usually termed, the common operations of the Holy Spirit. Everywhere throughout the Bible this incorrigibleness of sinners is made the real cause of their ordination to wrath. It is spoken of as if there were no other cause; for there is no other which hinders their salvation. They cannot believe because of their desperate wickedness, which they love; they will not because of their desperate hatred of God; or rather, of the holiness of God, to which they are required to conform themselves. So that it is true, that whom God predestinated to wrath, he foreknew as incurably wicked, and for that cause made them vessels of wrath. But the converse

of this proposition is not true concerning the election of grace. For God foreknew them also as no less desperately wicked than the non-elect; but it pleased him to extend mercy to them. Here Arminians fight against God, and calumniate his people. "Yea," saith God, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; THEREFORE, with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. xxxi. 3. I have not drawn thee either on account of foreseen faith, or repentance in thee, but in the exercise of that love I had for thee, before thy existence, and before any act of thine, either good or evil.

§ 12. *The Justice of God in the Election of Grace.*

By the choice of his people in Christ Jesus as their covenant head and Surety, God has displayed his justice more brilliantly than in the punishment of the wicked. It can never be said of them that the law of God is "magnified" in their punishment. It is simply vindicated and made honourable. But in the surety righteousness of Christ for his people, the law is both *magnified* and made honourable. Is. xlii. 21. He fulfilled for his people all righteousness. He "is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. x. 14. That election to salvation is in Christ Jesus, is placed by the scriptures beyond all controversy. See 2 Tim. i. 6; Titus, i. 2. And although the righteous-

ness of Christ is the only meritorious cause of salvation, the sovereignty of God is the only originating cause. For, their election in Christ is only the means for the accomplishment of the purpose, not the cause of that purpose. To this end was Christ given to the world. John iii. 16. But the world will not have him to reign over them. "Therefore, I said unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father." John vi. 65. "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." John xvii. 6. Thus we see both justice and mercy extended to Jacob, and only justice to Esau. Therefore, the apostle adds the declaration of God to Moses, (verse 15,) "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy." I say God extended both justice and mercy to Jacob, because he elected him to salvation "in Christ Jesus," (Eph. i. 3,) who took the penalty of Jacob's sin upon himself, (2 Cor. v. 21,) and engaged to obey the law for Jacob, (1 Cor. i. 30; John xviii. 8.) God is thus manifested to be "a just God and a Saviour," Is. xiv. 21, "that he might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." Therefore, God foreknew that Jacob would believe, and not Esau, because he had elected Jacob in Christ, and not Esau; and Christ had engaged in the everlasting covenant, to work this faith in Jacob, and not in Esau. Hence Christ is both the AUTHOR and the finisher of this faith, Heb. xii. 2. The Spirit of Christ works it in the soul, 2

Cor. iv. 13; and it is "the faith of God's elect." Therefore, the Arminian assertion that foreseen repentance is the cause of predestination, IS NOT TRUE. The reverse IS TRUE. Christ is "exalted to give repentance to Israel." Acts v. 31. "So, then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Rom. ix. 16. And here we may ask Arminians, if the purpose of God in predestination changes with their almost innumerable conversions, and periodical falls from grace, and recoveries of grace? A ludicrous consequence this, of a serious error.

§ 13. *The Doctrine of Election should be taught.*

The ultimate design of God, or the motive which influenced him in the eternal purpose of election, resides in himself. He "purposed IN HIMSELF." And "he giveth not account of any of his matters." Job xxxiii. 13. And all that can be said here is best said by our Lord himself. "Even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight." Mat. xi. 26. No man should be ashamed of his ignorance on this point; but all men should be ashamed not to acknowledge ignorance of this divine mystery. For "such knowledge is too wonderful for us; it is high, we cannot attain unto it." Ps. cxxxix. 6. We are no more required to explain this mystery, than we are required to explain that invisible bond which links together in glorious harmony the di-

vine sovereignty and the freedom of the human will; or the mystery of the Trinity and unity of persons in the Godhead. But these are revealed facts, and revealed to be taught. We KNOW, on the testimony of God himself, that the salvation of men originated in the sovereignty of the divine will; and we are required to pass beyond the dark abode of human reason, leaving behind the idle speculations of human philosophy, the presumptuous cavils of human depravity, and the blasphemies of human ignorance, and embrace firmly; and with patience, teach faithfully and earnestly the revealed truth, that the purpose of God concerning the creatures of his power, is eternal and immutable. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but the things which are revealed belong unto us, and our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." Deut. xxix. 29.

Our author quotes from Calvinists, the sentiment, that the doctrine of the divine decrees should be preached sparingly and cautiously. Dr. Dick, undoubtedly, expresses the general sentiment upon this point. "It is plain," says the Dr., "the preaching of this doctrine is not to be attempted by every sciolist: it calls for modesty and diffidence in the best informed, and for the utmost care, to avoid human speculations." To this agrees the Confession, Chap. III. Sec. 8. And we may add, the decrees of God are not a rule of duty; but they shed a flood of

light upon the path of duty. They unfold the glory of God as the only worthy motive to duty, and display the only efficient cause of its performance. They are, indeed, in the sense already explained, secret; but a revealed secret made manifest in the providence of God. Divine providence is the fulfilment of decrees; and any argument against preaching the latter would be equally valid against the former. Hence also every cavil against divine decrees, is equally against divine providence. So that Arminians can never be consistent believers in God's providential government of the world. Under the garb of truth they rank themselves with its enemies. The objections urged against preaching the divine decrees lie against Christianity itself; for they either run into, or are connected with, every doctrine revealed, and every duty enjoined in the Bible. Nor is this all: these objections are made against the explicit words of our Lord's commission to his ministry: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Mat. xxviii. 19, 20. On this point, the Dr. pours out his logic in the following lofty strains, no less amusing, than eloquent. "What! The subjects of a government not bound to act with the least reference to the decrees of its sovereign!—not responsible for not conforming to them! This is surely a strange doctrine. It is an indirect concession that the practical bearing of the

Calvinistic doctrine of decrees cannot be defended." P. 90. Strange confusion! A play upon the word "decrees;" or a comparison of the secret purpose of God with human enactments! What has the purpose, or providence of God to do with any law, either human or divine, provided it be just, and in harmony with the nature of the divine essence? Is God limited, or restricted in his purpose, by his commands to his creatures? Can he do nothing above, or beyond, the laws he has given them? Because he has prohibited us from putting our hands upon our neighbour's property or person, can he, therefore, not put his hand upon his own creatures? Because we cannot dispose of our neighbour's goods, does it therefore follow, that, our neighbour cannot dispose of his own goods? There may be, and often are, in human governments, enactments, or decrees, which do not extend to all the subjects of the government; and also secret decrees to which the subjects are not "bound to act with the least reference." So, on the other hand, the mere supposition that the creatures are bound to regulate their conduct by the secret purpose of God, is a supposition that God can, in no respect, be above, or different from his creatures. This strange confusion of Arminian ideas can only be traced to ignorance, or a readiness to employ the lowest sophistry, as a snare for people whose pursuits do not teach them to deal in quibbles.

§ 14. *The Danger of Hostility to the Sovereignty of God.*

The scriptures abound in examples of the most severe judgments inflicted upon men for the denial and disregard of divine sovereignty. Nor should we be surprised, or murmur at this. The sin is grievous, and must receive its just wages. Korah, Dathan and Abiram, were set up as a warning beacon to the end of the world, because they rebelled against those whom God had chosen. Num. xvi. 3, 5, 30. Need we name Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, or Sennacherib, concerning the latter of whom God says—"Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back the way thou camest." Is. xxxvii. 29. The punishment of gospel despisers turns upon this hinge; they would not have God to reign over them. Ps. ii. 1-6; Luke xix. 27. For the right, the prerogative of doing according to his will in heaven and on earth; of dispensing his gifts to whom, and in the manner he pleases, is pre-eminently essential to Him, who only can say, "I AM," and whose name is "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

But Dr. H. glories that "none have done more to bring Calvinism into discredit than Methodist preachers." P. 115. This is true, and informs us what kind of aliment they dispense to dying men.

CHAPTER IV.

NON-ELECTION AND REPROBATION OF THE WICKED.

§ 1. *The Doctrine defined.*

THE apostle says, "Whom he will he hardeneth." Rom. ix. 18. "Who stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed." 1 Pet. ii. 8. In the crucifixion of our Lord, Herod, Pilate, and the Jews, did whatsoever the counsel of God determined before to be done. Acts iv. 28. "Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them." Jer. vi. 30. The wicked are also "vessels of wrath fitted, [or predestined] to destruction," Rom. ix. 22, and "were before of old ordained to this condemnation." Jude 4.

But there is a radical difference between the decrees of election and reprobation, which Arminians either cannot, or will not, see. So far as the mere negative act of passing by the wicked and leaving them out of the election of grace is concerned, it is inseparable from the decree of election, and flows from the same free sovereignty. But, so far as relates to the positive decree of *hardening* and *destruction*, it is the act of a righteous judge inflicting punishment upon the guilty, and is nothing more nor less, than the

purpose of God to execute that just penalty of his righteous law, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezek. xviii. 4. "For the Lord is our JUDGE, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us." Is. xxxiii. 22. And we must neither lose sight of the various relations which God sustains to his rational creatures, nor of the fact that in him reside all the functions of government. The passage, 1 Pet. ii. 6-8, the strongest in the Bible on the subject of reprobation, teaches fully and clearly the doctrine, that being found disobedient, they were APPOINTED as a punishment of that disobedience, to stumble against the Word, that is Christ, and reject him whom the Father hath laid in Zion, as the only foundation of a sinner's hope. The entire passage is acknowledged to be correctly translated thus:—"For even it is contained in the Scripture, (Is. xxviii. 16,) behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he who believeth on him shall not be ashamed. To you, therefore, who believe, is this honour; but to the disobedient, the stone which the builders rejected the same is become the head of the corner; also a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence. The disobedient stumble against the word, to which verily they were appointed."—*Macknight*. As this is an approved Calvinistic authority with Arminians, it is hoped it will satisfy them. It is, so far as I know, entirely satisfactory to Calvinists. They differ with Macknight upon other points. See also Is. vi. 9-13.

§ 2. *Human Reason incompetent.*

The speculations of men in reference to this sovereignty of God are vain, presumptuous, and of most pernicious tendency to the unlearned. The only good effect which has resulted from them, is the settled conviction of all sober Christians, that their only security consists in a close and rigid adherence to both the letter and spirit of the written word. Neither the *manner* in which God exercises a secret influence upon the heart of man; nor the *reason* why this influence is exerted upon one, and not on another; nor *how* both these things can be done without any coercion of man's free agency, can ever be grasped by the feeble capacities of the human mind. We only know that they are facts, every where revealed in the word, and confirmed in the history, observation, and every day's experience of mankind. They are facts also of the highest practical bearing, scarcely less important to the salvation of men than a knowledge of the facts of the Trinity and unity of the Godhead, and the supreme deity of our Lord. On these points the writer of these pages, deprecates and discards all human reasonings of both the parties to this controversy, as of such a presumptuous character, that they almost invariably lead the combatants into unintentional blasphemy, as a just punishment of so great temerity. And here lies the most fearful malady of our fallen nature; that pride of intellect, which neither will nor can

bow to divine authority, till subdued by divine power. But whatever is revealed is to be believed and taught; especially those explanations which the Scriptures furnish, and which lie within the scope of reason. Nothing beyond this is here attempted. Nothing further should be attempted by any one. Therefore, we pass over those speculations of philosophical divines concerning *the origin of evil*, which only darken the moral atmosphere. It is not surprising that so many common people abandon the study of the Bible in despair, when, on the one hand, they hear the doctrine of divine sovereignty denounced as “worse than pagan fatalism;” and on the other hand, hear explanations of the doctrine, which are utterly incomprehensible; and all this, too, from the authorized teachers of Christianity. In such circumstances, were there no other hinderance, the salvation of poor sinners would be impossible, without the divine teaching of the Spirit. This state of things does of itself demonstrate the inefficiency of Arminianism to bring relief to the perishing. Indeed, if the system were divested of the fleshly vitality imparted to it by the pride, ambition, interest, prejudice, and proselyting spirit of a sectarian organization, it would die of its own inanition.

§ 3. *Reprobation not the Cause, but the Penalty of Sin.*

Arminians first confound predestination with reprobation, and both with the general decrees

of God; and then, in defiance of the uniform and positive assertions of Calvinists to the contrary, charge upon them the doctrine, that God compelled men to sin by his decree; and by the same decree appointed them to wrath, as a punishment for the sin which he compelled them to commit! "The poor reprobate may be silenced at the day of judgment, by the terrors which surround him, and by the stern authority of the Judge, but *not by the want of a valid plea*.—When the sentence shall go forth consigning him to perdition for the deeds done in the body, he will have in readiness, whether allowed to utter it or not, the unanswerable answer: 'Lord, the deeds for which I am condemned were in all respects what thou didst predetermine. I have executed from first to last thy wise and holy counsels. Had I acted otherwise, I should have frustrated thy free purposes, formed before the foundation of the world. I have, indeed, gone contrary to thy published law, but that thou didst render inevitable by making that law antagonistic to the eternal decree, which thou dost not allow to be thwarted in any instance, by man or angel,'" Hodgson, p. 86. "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," Acts iv. 27, 28. Who can read these words of the Spirit of God, and then read the foregoing

tirade of Dr. H., without a shudder? Certainly not humble Christians. One thing is certain, and it lies clearly within the grasp of human reason; if Dr. H. is right, the Bible is not the word of God. For there is not the least shade of difference in the meaning of the language of the Bible and the phrase, "God ordained whatsoever comes to pass;" only the case here cited from the Bible teaches that God foreordained the punishment of sin, by the worst crime ever committed on earth; and yet the criminals acted freely, altogether from their own impulses. And if the commission of lesser crimes in the same way, furnish the criminal with "a valid plea," in justification, much more does this example furnish the crucifiers of our Lord with "a valid plea!" But all this blasphemy of the Scriptures, through a Calvinism of his own imagination, arises from the false assumption, without proof, and contrary to evidence the most abundant and conclusive, that divine sovereignty over man's conduct cannot co-exist with man's free agency and accountability. And until Arminianism prove this, its darling dogma, to be true, it can never rise above the dignity of a calumniator of men, and a blasphemer of God. And when it has proved it, it has established Atheism. Because the Scriptures clearly teach that God did foreordain the crucifixion of Christ, and that ungodly instruments should do it in the free exercise of their own wickedness, Acts ii. 23. And they also teach, that while election to life and

preterition, are wholly acts of sovereignty, reprobation is wholly an act of merited punishment. "That, as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. v. 21. "For the *wages of sin* is death; but the *gift of God* is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. vi. 23. So then, the truth is demonstrated, that while God passed by the reprobate, in the election of his people to life through Jesus Christ, by a sovereign act, for causes known only to himself, he appointed or foreordained them to wrath only, as a punishment for their crimes.

§ 4. *Predestination of believers to life, no bar whatever, in the way of the salvation of the reprobate.*

God's purpose to save some, does not affect, in any point, the relation which he sustains to others; nor their responsibility to him. They are left, in every particular aspect in which they can be viewed, precisely as they were. The election of Jacob to salvation had not the least, not even the most remote influence upon the character, responsibilities, privileges, or duties of Esau. If A. and his neighbour B. owe their neighbour C. each one dollar; and if C. choose, for reasons of his own, which he declines to make known, to cancel the debt of A. and make a present to him of one thousand dollars additional, what influence can that have upon the

character, rights, privileges, or responsibilities of B.? Is he any the less a debtor to C.? No sane man will say that he is. This is the predestination taught in the Bible, so far as it affects the rights of the reprobate. It was alike the duty of both Jacob and Esau to repent of their sins: to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved. It continued to be alike the duty of both. Because faith is such a *condition* of salvation, that whosoever continues in unbelief shall be damned, and whosoever believes shall be saved; it does not indeed constitute the believer's justifying righteousness. Faith is not, as we shall see, a *meritorious* condition, as Arminians dream: not a valuable thing paid for another valuable thing. In that sense, the righteousness of Christ is the only meritorious condition of salvation. Nevertheless, faith is such a condition, or means to an end, if you please,—or call it what you please; for we inquire after things, not words,—that without it none can be saved. The elect, therefore, are saved because they believe; and the non-elect would also be saved if they would believe. Christ is equally given to both the parties in the gospel offer, John iii. 16. Both are equally called to believe in him and be saved, Prov. viii. 4. Both are equally solicited, Matt. xi. 28. Both are commanded to believe in Christ, 1 John iii. 23. And both would be alike damned, if they should continue in their unbelief. So that it is not the election of A. that renders the salva-

tion of B. impossible; but B's. own unbelief. If B. will believe, he shall as infallibly be saved as A. But God, foreseeing that neither A. nor B. would or could believe, if left to themselves, because both had destroyed themselves, (Hosea xiii. 9,) decrees to put forth his own divine efficiency, and make A. both willing and able to believe, Ps. cx. 3; Phil. ii. 13; so that the Lord Jesus Christ loses none who had been given to him, John vi. 13.

We have insisted the more upon this point, because it is the very marrow of the gospel, and shows us that the rights, privileges, and obligations of both the elect and non-elect are equal under the gospel dispensation; and the impossibility of the salvation of either of the parties by means of anything in themselves is alike the consequence of their apostacy. To ascribe the impossibility of the salvation of the non-elect to either the purpose or providence of God, which is the same thing, is indeed a most desperate solution of this Arminian difficulty. For there is no alternative between the doctrine, that every man has in himself sufficient ability to believe, which is necessarily implied in Dr. H's. definition of predestination, given above, (Chap. II., Sec. 1,) and the Calvinistic doctrine, that, in the case of all who believe, God by his efficient power, implants in their hearts, what before was only in their heads, the principles of the written word, in their new birth, which principles

become the root, or foundation of faith in the soul. Consequently, it is only in the exercise of this newly communicated divine principle that any sinner ever did, will, or can believe. Does the communication of this divine principle to believers hinder the salvation of the reprobate? Did it cause their condemnation? Was it the cause of their being left out of God's eternal purpose to save his people? Those who will answer any of these questions in the affirmative, have taken leave of their boasted power of reason. Yet, every one of them must be answered affirmatively, or every one of these Arminian cavils becomes an "airy nothing." These considerations discover to us the harmony of the divine decrees with divine law; of divine sovereignty with human freedom; and of divine grace with inflexible justice. It reconciles every text, and every expression of the living oracles of God. But in the mouth of an Arminian, the word of God has ever been, and ever must be a contradiction, a riddle, an absurdity, which can neither be explained nor even comprehended; and consequently can never be defended as a revelation from God. Hodgson, in common with all his brethren, unwittingly demonstrates his ignorance of the word of God, and that his belief in it is a mere superstitious prejudice, when he asks with an air of triumph, "How did they come by the knowledge of God's secret decrees?" P. 91. We respond, by the work of the Holy Ghost writing the word of God

upon their hearts. Like the Arminians, in their natural state they received not the things of the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. ii. 14. But when God *opened their understandings*, (Luke xxiv. 32, 45,) and their *hearts*, (Acts xvi. 14,) then they received the truth in the love of it. But the Dr. adds:—"We protest against their claiming to be intrusted with the secrets of Heaven." *Ib.* His protest is vain and impotent. God took counsel of none when he elected his people to eternal life, and he will ask leave of none to bestow that life upon them. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Hence says the Psalmist, "The SECRET of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will SHOW THEM his covenant." Ps. xxv. 14. And this is just the difference between these conflicting systems. Consequently, the only answer to which Arminians are entitled, is that which our Lord has given them in anticipation, Mat. xx. 15: "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?"

§ 5. *Doctrine of the fourth section proved.*

We repeat, that the elect are saved because they believe, and the non-elect would also be saved if they would believe. For, while the passing by of the non-elect, when God purposed to put forth his power and pluck his people as a brand from the fire, was purely a sovereign act,

of the reason of which we know nothing, except, that had this not been done, none would have been saved; and while election is the *cause* which makes it *certain* that the people of God will believe, and equally *certain* that the non-elect will not believe, it is not the efficient cause of either the one or the other. But the effectual work of the Spirit is the cause of the one, and man's free will acting out his depravity, the cause of the other. The generality of the Jews before the destruction of the nation were Arminians. They cavilled in that day as they do now. If God purpose in sovereignty to bestow the grace of faith upon whom he will, without regard to anything in them, or done by them, then, said the Jews, it makes void the law. Rom. iii. 31. So, if Isaac is born in a supernatural manner, above, and without the ordinary means, or the ceremonies of the law, and without regard to anything good in him, it makes void the law, Gal. iii. 21, and those who are not thus born in this supernatural manner, are made mere machines; the law is unmeaning, it cannot bind them, they have "*a valid plea*," for all this wickedness. See Hodgson, page 86, as quoted in the preceding section. But Paul repels this cavil with a holy indignation, in the most peremptory manner. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid." And as the

fulfilment of the promises is just the accomplishment of the decree of predestination to life, Arminianism itself being judge, (see Dr. H's. definition of predestination,) so, when the apostle uses the word "promises," it necessarily presupposes and includes the purpose of God. So also the interrogation of Paul, Gal. iii. 21, may be read with equal truth and pungency, "Is the law then against the purpose of God? God forbid." Therefore while Paul places a "God forbid," against putting the law of God at variance with the purpose of God, Arminianism declares, God forbid there should be any agreement between the law and purpose of God! For if it should be proved that the decree of God to save only a portion of mankind, is in perfect and loving harmony with his commands to men, their whole system is effectually demolished, and their vocation gone. But Paul makes this matter yet more plain. He adds, "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." If the "law could have given life," eternal life should have been given to men "by the law;" that is, as the reward of their obedience to the law. But no such law could be given to man after his fall. For the "law was weak through the flesh," Rom. viii. 3, that is, it had no power in itself to *secure* obedience, because the flesh, *man's corrupt* nature, had become powerless to comply with its demands, which continued to be the same after,

that they were before the fall; consequently the law breathes only wrath to guilty man. Gal. iii. 10. Hence the necessity of a supernatural provision, through a Surety able to keep the law, if any of this guilty race are to be saved. And as corrupt nature is no more capable of obeying the law in the hand of Christ the Mediator, than in its natural state; for both faith and repentance are the gift of God; Eph. ii. 8; Acts v. 31; so, after Christ had been given freely, fully, and sincerely to mankind sinners, the purpose of God to *apply* the benefits of his redemption, became necessary to effect the salvation of any. Consequently the salvation of his people, and the condemnation of his enemies, became certain by a divine purpose, which Paul terms *predestination*. However, in all this, the gift of Christ, and the command to believe in him, and the obligation to obey, and the inability of sinners remain unaffected by the decree; and the truth is established that the decrees do not cause the wicked to sin; nor impinge their liberty; nor prevent their believing; they simply do not compel them to believe; nor are they at all in the way of the salvation of the reprobate. They only prevent the unbelief and condemnation of the elect.

§ 6. *The purpose of God not against the command to believe in Christ.*

While the sublime truth, which runs through the entire word of God, that salvation is wholly

of grace, must neither be denied, undervalued, or disregarded, it is equally important to know and maintain that this "grace reigns through righteousness;" that it not only respects natural justice, but is jealous of the claims of law. "Yea, we establish the law." Grace is magnified, in election, in the gift of Christ as a surety, and in the application of the blessings of Christ's purchase. But the law is also no less magnified than grace. So that, when we contemplate salvation as the work of God, we are compelled to exclaim, "Grace reigns;" when we contemplate it as procured by the work of Christ, and see justice vindicated, the law magnified, we exclaim, "grace reigns through righteousness." It is apprehended, that the apostle, James, ii. 20-25, teaches even more than the doctrine, that faith only, or the believer's sincerity, is justified by works. The fair and only proper construction of the 24th verse is, that the works of the law are established in harmony with sovereign grace. "Not under the law," yet, "not without law to God." So, that, in regard to my own person, the believer may say, my salvation in every stage of its progress from its inception to its consummation is wholly of grace, and there is nothing in me, or done by me as its procuring cause; yet, in the work done for me, and wrought within me, by my adorable Surety, I see how that by works I am justified, and not by faith only. The entire work in all its parts is the

work of God. God is in Christ, according to his eternal purpose conforming his people to the law, so that they may be justified by grace through the works of the law. "In one and the same decree of election," says Fisher, "the love of God lights upon both the Head and upon the members, considered as in him." Eph. i. 4. So that, in the Head the Church is justified by works, in the members by grace only. Neither does the fact that Christ himself is the gift of the Father's love, militate against this view. Paul and James are in loving brotherhood, not in polemic antagonism. Salvation, viewed as the work of God saving the sinner, totally excludes the idea of works; viewed as the work of Christ, it is of works. "He shall see of the travail of his soul." Thus, the purpose of God, and the law of God are in loving harmony, in defiance of their enemies. "Righteousness and peace," the law and the electing love of God, have met together, and have kissed each other. Of course the reader will not confound, as Arminians do, this justification with that of which Paul speaks, which consists only in pardon and a title to eternal life; or a reversal of the sentence of condemnation which stood against the sinner in his natural state. That respects only the sinner's *legal* standing, and consists in the *imputation* of Christ's righteousness, as the meritorious cause of pardon. But James speaks of the work of Christ in the believer by his Spirit, conforming

him personally to the law, as well as justification on the ground of imputed righteousness; or, in other words, Paul speaks only of that which Christ has done for the believer; James speaks both of that which Christ has done for, and *in* the believer. The one confers the title to heaven; the other fits for its possession. By confounding these things, Arminians are led to reject the divine sovereignty of God in predestination, and the doctrine of justification only through the imputed righteousness of Christ. They seem to acknowledge some kind of gracious influence common to all men, which they call free grace, in the right improvement of which they believe and repent, and perform good works; and the right use of means under the influence of the Spirit common to all men, they suppose to be the cause both of their predestination and justification; and thus they substitute their own act of believing in the place of the righteousness of Christ as the meritorious cause of justification; their own good works in the place of the good works spoken of by the apostle James, which are the works of the Spirit of Christ wrought in them. With such views, it is not strange they should suppose the purpose of God electing his people to faith in Christ, to justification in him, and to sanctification in him, or good works, which are wrought in them by the Spirit of Christ, contrary to their notion of free-will, and moral obligation, and to the law both as it commands faith

in Christ, and as it is a rule of life. But all these things being as much above the power of fallen human nature as the creation of the world, the Arminian theory must fall to the ground, as we shall see in the next chapter.

Consequently it is the purpose of God only that establishes good works, *first*, his purpose to justify his people through the righteousness of Christ without the law; and *then* to bring them into conformity to the law by the works of Christ through the Spirit, who works in them, both to will and to do all their works of his good pleasure. How, then, can the purpose of God to conform his people to the law, make void the law? How can the purpose of God that his people shall perform good works tend to licentiousness? How can the purpose of God that his people shall believe place any bar in the way of others; or relax in any manner the obligation of others to believe? How can it restrict in any way either the offer of Christ to mankind sinners, or the binding nature of the command to believe in Christ which has gone forth into all the world, so far as the sound of the gospel is heard? Consequently the promise made to those who would be obedient, was made in every respect to those whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, as it was to Caleb and Joshua, and had any of those who fell believed as did Caleb and Joshua, they would have entered into Canaan with them. "So, we see, that they could not enter in, because of unbelief," Heb.

iii. 19, and not because of the decree; for the decree was not the cause of their unbelief; but their own wickedness was the cause. The decree was the cause of Joshua's faith; and his faith was the cause of his entering into the promised rest.

The Lord is a rock, his work is perfect. The depravity of man cannot defeat his purposes. He scorns the noise and tumult of earth's guilty inhabitants. They imagine vain things, and rage to no purpose. "The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved; he uttered his voice, the earth melted." God does nothing in vain. The Lord Jesus Christ "SHALL see of the travail of his soul, and SHALL be satisfied." Is. liii. 12. But God foreknew the wickedness of men; he knew what was in man; and he foreknew that when the promise of life in Christ should be made to them, many of them would profess to receive that promise and enter externally into covenant with him, only to break that covenant. "All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient." Ex. xxiv. 7. But God knew that they would not be obedient; "Oh, that there were such a heart in them." Deut. v. 28. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Does God, therefore, place obstacles in the way of a sinner's salvation? No. As a righteous judge, he vin-

dicates his law, and maintains the honour of his government. But neither the predestination of his people to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved; nor the preterition of the reprobate furnishes a plea for disobedience to his law. God has not been pleased to save the whole human family. Universal salvation is not true. And while Arminians condemn Universalists, they quarrel with God because he has not been pleased to save all men.

CHAPTER V.

ARMINIAN EXEGESIS.

§ 1. *Exposition of Ephesians i. 11.*

THE present examination must necessarily be limited to Dr. Hodgson's book. But it presents the varied and incongruous features of the system in a bold and striking light. His exposition of Eph. i. 11, is here given *in extenso*: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

"We now propose to test this dogma of Calvinism by reason and scripture. We shall not at present enter upon the examination of the

proof texts, though we hold the Holy Scriptures to be the ultimate authority on all theological questions, but shall compare it with acknowledged scripture principles. And, yet, it may be reasonably expected that some attention will be paid to the passage which, according to custom, has been selected as presenting the subject of discourse. It is the very first proof text adduced by the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, but it fails to meet the demand made upon it. It does not contain the doctrine sought to be proved. It does, indeed, assert the predestination of believers to certain blessings, a point not in dispute, and also that they are predestinated to these blessings according to God's purpose; but all this is very far from teaching that *God has fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass*. The proof is supposed by some to be contained in the remaining portion of the passage,—‘who worketh all things,’ &c. But we must take the entire expression of the apostle, in order to get his meaning, ‘who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.’ By this he means to say, merely, that in whatever God does towards men or angels, he is uncontrolled. He carries out his own free purposes. He does not conform to the counsel of others. He does not yield to the clamours of discontented subjects, or make concessions to contemporary and independent powers. The words are thus paraphrased by Mac-knight, a Calvinistic commentator: ‘According

to the gracious purpose of him, who effectually accomplisheth all his benevolent intentions, by the most proper means, according to the wise determination of his own will." We may, with as much propriety, argue from the apostolic injunction, 'Do all things without murmurings and disputings,' Phil. ii. 14, that Christians are required by the law of God to *do all things* absolutely, as, from the clause under consideration that God has decreed and executes whatsoever comes to pass. But, if our brethren insist upon so understanding the apostle, we shall hold them to their interpretation. We shall not allow them to contradict it whenever the exigencies of the argument may render it convenient." Pages 53, 54.

§ 2. *It places little reliance upon the Scriptures.*

It might be reasonably expected, that, in a REFUTATION of Calvinism, an appeal would be made to the scriptures; or at least, some attempt made to prove that Calvinism is inconsistent with divine revelation. Such an expectation is so clearly justifiable, when the refutation comes from an authorized minister of the gospel, who holds the "Scriptures to be the ultimate authority on all theological questions," that no sufficient excuse or even palliation can be invented, for this palpable neglect of Dr. H. How inimitable his coolness! "We shall not enter upon an examination of the proof texts!" We can refute

Calvinism without any such unnecessary labour! Our own wisdom is fully competent to the task! We do indeed permit you to go to the scriptures as an "ultimate" resort, provided you understand them as teaching our doctrine, which we know is true! For if Calvinism were true, it would prove, "that no man can contribute any thing to his personal salvation." And as this dangerous doctrine appears to be taught, in many places, such as Rom. viii. 7, "The carnal mind is enmity against God," and 1 Cor. ii. 14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither CAN he know them, because they are spiritually discerned;" so it is a much safer course for you, my dear hearers, not to "enter upon the examination of proof texts," till you are fully established in the Arminian doctrine. This method seldom fails; and it is the only way by which Calvinism can be effectually refuted. This is free-will stripped of all guises! It sets man free from the authority of God; but subjects him to the cheerless despotism of teachers and rulers. It fully accounts for the estimate which the Dr. puts upon the claims of Calvinists; that their doctrines are "essential to civil and religious liberty." He calls it an "extravagant pretension." So do Romanists. But the history of the world has demonstrated this great truth, that there is no alternative for mankind, between subjection to the authority of God, on the one

hand, or human despotism on the other. "Choose ye whom you will serve."

§ 3. *It perverts the Scriptures.*

Not contented with the work of garbling Calvinistic writers, and forging doctrines for them, Arminian exegesis puts a forced construction upon some passages contradictory of others, and even substitutes other words in the place of words employed by the Holy Spirit. So, of the Dr's. exposition of Eph. i. 11, which we have quoted entire. The more the reader examines this curious specimen of biblical criticism, the more will he discover of its profundity.

The text, Eph. i. 11, says the Dr., "is very far from teaching that *God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.*" The apostle "means to say, merely, that, in whatsoever God does towards men or angels, he is uncontrolled." Very well. Why not believe and submit to what you say the apostle means? This would save you a world of trouble. It would have saved the labour of writing your book. For the apostle says, God "WORKETH ALL THINGS after the counsel of his own will." And you say, "In whatever he does towards men or angels, he is uncontrolled." Paul says he "worketh all things" towards them. Consequently he has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass concerning them. Is not this so? If not, surely you will not object to supply a slight oversight in your exegesis, and tell us what

the apostle means by "all things." This defect needs a remedy. But as the Dr. proves the whole from Macknight, a Calvinistic commentator, who crept into the church of Scotland during the last century, and was enabled, notwithstanding his Arminian proclivities, to maintain his position under the reign of *Moderatism*, which was then at its zenith, it is hoped Macknight's paraphrase of 1 Pet. ii. 6, 8, quoted above, Chap. iv. sec. 1, will prove satisfactory to Dr. H. The reader will readily perceive that the words which he has quoted from Macknight, express a mere truism which no Calvinist ever denied; but express absolutely nothing whatever in reference to the meaning of the apostle. But on turning to Macknight, on most points an acknowledged Arminian, I could scarcely believe my own eyes. He paraphrases the text thus:—"By whom even we Jews have inherited the promises that were made to the children of Abraham and of God, having been predestinated to the adoption of sons, (ver. 5,) not through obedience to the law, but through faith, according to the gracious purpose of him, who effectually accomplisheth all his benevolent intentions, by the most proper means, according to the wise determination of his own will." Thus we see Dr. H. omits more than half of Macknight's exposition, leaving that part which he does quote destitute of meaning. Macknight writes warily, manifesting the struggle between the explicit

testimony of the text and his cloudy views. At first sight it seems doubtful whether he uses the phrase "through faith" in the Arminian sense, as the *cause* or as the *EFFECT* of predestination; but the phrase "proper means," in the last clause but one, seems to restrict the passage to the Calvinistic sense. But whatever may have been the meaning of Macknight, the quotation of a part of his words in the manner of Dr. H., is utterly inexcusable. The text should be paraphrased thus:—In Christ Jesus, also, we Jews, who believe, have obtained by our effectual calling the inheritance of eternal life, even as the Gentiles spoken of, verses 4, 5; according as the Father hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, even from all eternity, in order that we should be holy and blameless before him in love; having predestinated us to the adoption of sons, through Jesus Christ, not from a necessity of nature, nor any thing foreseen in us, nor any external influence whatever; but according to the good pleasure of his will, bringing to pass, with Omnipotent energy, (*ἐνεργουντος*,) all things in exact conformity to the eternal determination of his own will.

Such is the apostolical bulwark at first erected by Moses, against which Arminian artillery has been levelled to no purpose since the days of Korah, and his company; nay, more, since "Cain brought of the *fruit of the ground* an offering to the Lord," in contempt of divine

sovereignty, instead "of the *firstling of his flock*," as God had appointed, to typify that great and all-sufficient sacrifice, on account of which, as the *meritorious* cause, he had predestinated his people to eternal life.

§ 4. *It makes a Babel of Scripture.*

We have seen the value of Dr. H's. Calvinistic authority, for contradicting his text. It is also necessary that we should attend to the only passage of Scripture he has cited, and be thankful for the small favour of even one text, although it has not the remotest bearing upon the subject he is discussing. But here it is:—"Do all things without murmurings and disputings." Phil. ii. 14. A most excellent divine moral precept for the regulation of Christian intercourse which it is desirable should be observed better than is generally the case. But we leave it to the superior sagacity of the next General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to point out its bearing upon the apostolic teaching of Eph. i. 11, or even upon the Arminian doctrine of predestination.

However, the quotation of this passage is not without its designed effect. Arminianism pops up its head in the back ground, in the following words:—"We may, with as much propriety, argue from it that Christians are required by the law of God to do all things absolutely, as, from the clause under consideration, that 'God worketh all things after the counsel of his own

will,' that 'God has decreed and executes whatsoever comes to pass.'" It is an easy way to evade the point of an argument, or baffle an opponent, by using, without defining it, a word which admits of different constructions, of which the use of the term "absolutely" in the foregoing quotation from Dr. H., is an example. The question here, is, does the Dr. mean by "absolutely," *completely* independent of anything extraneous; or *peremptory*, a thing which can neither be evaded, nor limited in the extent of its claims? If the former be his meaning, it is sufficient to reply, that both the purpose and law of God are in themselves complete, and independent of any extraneous thing, and therefore absolute in the fullest sense of the term; both originating in, and springing from either the perfections or sovereign will of God, independent of anything whatever external to God. And we know of no exigencies of the argument that require Calvinists to depart from their own interpretation. If he mean by "absolutely," that the claims of the divine law can no more be evaded than the purpose of God can be defeated, and that the extent of both is equal, both being absolutely universal in regard to the rational subjects of God's moral government, the question in debate, it is that which Calvinists hold, but Arminians deny, and in common with Dr. H. regard as an absurdity. What can be their views of God, or his perfections, purposes, or laws? It is not easy to perceive.

For, although the purposes and commands of God, except positive institutions, originate in the *divine* perfections, they are none the less absolute; but, for that reason, only the more so, if such a thing were possible. All are infinitely wise and holy; all are either merciful or just, or both. All, both purposes and precepts, are absolute and eternal as the being of God. Will the Dr. tell us how far we may go in "murmurings and disputings," without violating the precept given in Phil. ii. 24? As the precept, according to him, is not absolute, where is the point at which its violation becomes *sin*? Does it prohibit hard *thoughts* of each other, and prohibit all that goes beyond such thoughts? Or, does it permit the addition of hard *looks* to the thoughts, and forbid anything more? Or, does it allow the addition of hard *words*, and fierce looks to the thoughts in order to its transgression? Or, may we in addition to thoughts, looks, and words, *shake the fist* at each other? There is need of light here, Dr., that we may know when our "murmurings and disputings," amount to sin. You have left us in the dark by taking away the absolute authority of God's law, as to the *degree* of its obligation, and left us no substitute. A new method of exegesis surely. Deny the extent of the *law* in order to evade the force of the *purpose* of God! This is killing Paul with his own weapons, and making a fool of David. "Thy commandment is exceeding broad." Ps. cxix. 96. It also looks

very much like a contradiction of our Lord's words, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." Matt. v. 18.

§ 5. *It savours more of profanity than of the Spirit of Christ.*

Of course the Dr.'s book contains Wesley's famous consequence, to which he attached the initials of Mr. Toplady; for who ever saw an Arminian book on the subject of predestination, since the days of Wesley, which did not contain it? namely, if Calvinism be true,—“The elect shall be saved, do what they will; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can.” Verily, this “famous consequence,” has given vitality to Arminianism longer than “the handful of meal and cruse of oil,” sustained the widow and her son, in the days of the prophet Elijah; and that too, without a miracle. See the answer to this cavil throughout the preceding chapter, especially Sec. 1. But however much this profane wit may be deplored, as it certainly is by men who have a heart to feel for the poor souls it has deluded and confirmed in their hostility to the gospel, it need surprise no one. If men will persist in perverting the words of God, because they cannot reconcile them to their lofty notions of man's free will and ability, in order to excite the hatred of the ignorant and the perishing against the only means by which they can be saved, it is not

surprising if their wit should be as profane, as their opposition to divine truth is deep-rooted. And whatever may be the estimate such men form concerning themselves, every intelligent reader of the Bible, who has not permitted his eyes to be put out by human authority, knows their profane levity is aimed not against sinful men, like themselves, but against God. In what other way can we account for their railings against the inscrutable sovereignty of God in the following style?—That it leads to such consequences, as, “that there is no sin in the world; or, that if there be sin, God is the author of it; that, if sin exists, God prefers sin to holiness, in every instance in which sin takes place; that sin is not an evil, but a real good; that God has two hostile wills relative to the same thing; that, not only are his secret decrees and written laws at variance, but he has also decreed and brings to pass opposite and contradictory events; that there is, in fact, no moral government; that the devil and his angels are as faithful servants of God as any of his elect; that it sanctions all the errors that were ever promulgated; that it furnishes a complete justification of the worst conduct of the worst men that ever lived; and, finally, that it is worse than the pagan doctrine of fatalism.” Hodgson, pages 91–101. For an answer to this, see the foregoing chapters. But it may be asked, “Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to it?”

Undoubtedly, that his elect people should be saved, (1 Cor. i. 21,) and that fools should be left inexcusable. John xv. 22. This is man's wisdom, reasoning from the creature to the Creator. "Thou thoughtest that I was ALTOGETHER AS THYSELF." Ps. l. 21. Truly, the intellectual pride of man is an officious counsellor, but a blind guide. For, "the counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." Ps. xxxiii. 17. "He hath done whatsoever he pleased." Ps. cxv. 3. And "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord," Ps. xxxvii. 23; and "the way of man is not in himself," Jer. x. 23; nor the power "to direct his own steps;" "The Lord hath MADE ALL THINGS FOR HIMSELF;" the righteous are made for his glory, "vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory," Rom. ix. 23; and the wicked are also made for his glory; "yea, even the wicked for the day of evil," Prov. xvi. 4, "who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." Jude 4. "Hath not the potter power over the clay to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What, if God, WILLING to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" Rom. ix. 21, 22. And what, if God WILLING "to make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory," (verse 23,) "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing

formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" verse 20.

§ 6. *Wesley's "famous consequence" dissected.*

But let us look at this "famous consequence." Let the reader examine it, dissect it, ponder upon it. Every man should know for himself the real value of the entire stock in trade of John Wesley & Co. Is their capital sufficient for the redemption of their circulating medium? Will their acceptances be honoured, when the hour of trial comes? Or will it turn out to be a swindling establishment, and leave its millions of dupes heart-broken, despairing bankrupts; shut out of heaven itself, before they can replenish their empty vessels? How many of its victims are destined to be plunged in a moment, from the fondest, highest anticipations of future glory, into the blackness of darkness for ever? Better make these inquiries, while there is time and opportunity. Misplaced confidence in man proves the broad highway which so leads the Pagan and Popish worlds to destruction, that few find the way of life. And is the Protestant world destined to the same fearful doom? Have we lost all that our fathers gained three hundred years ago, by their fierce conflict with Arminianism, when they encountered it clad in the armor of Rome, and armed with anathemas, tortures and death in their most terrific forms? THE REFORMATION OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY WAS CALVINISM, BREAKING INTO PIECES THE IRON

SCEPTRE OF ARMINIANISM. This is a fixed fact, stereotyped upon the undying page of history. A denial of this fact by the learned, displays such hardihood as justly ranks them among that class of impostors who fatten upon the ignorance and credulity of the multitude.

What then we ask, is this "famous consequence" of John Wesley's? It is not in the creed of any sect of Calvinists. It was never penned by any Calvinist since the beginning of the world. And Dr. H., by calling it Wesley's "famous consequence," tacitly admits the truth, that it is not admitted by Calvinists, yet he is not ashamed of it! What then, we ask again, is it? The reader will perceive it has two parts, —1. "The elect shall be saved, do what they will." To this part we answer, that Wesley knew, and every Arminian to this day knows, that Calvinism teaches the very opposite of the monstrous sentiment that "the elect shall be saved do what they will." The elect are predestinated to do not their own will, but the will of God. To this end, they are born not of their own will, like Arminians, but of the will of God, John i. 13: they understand the will of God, Eph. v. 17: they do the will of God, 1 John ii. 17: they are sanctified by the will of God, Heb. x. 10: they live, not to the lusts of men, but to the will of God, 1 Pet. iv. 2; and they suffer according to the will of God, 1 Pet. iv. 19. So much for this stale calumny of Arminianism, "twice dead, plucked up by the roots." 2.

"The reprobate shall be damned, do what they can." We answer, Wesley believed in common with all Arminians, that the salvation of the reprobate is an impossibility, and yet presents it as a Calvinistic absurdity! And not content with this deception, he goes a step further and falsely ascribes the impossibility to the purpose of God in predestination, yet he knew that the reprobate are damned for their incorrigible wickedness, especially for their rejection of Christ, as has been fully explained in chapter IV. But what do Arminians mean? That no man can be punished against his own will?—Can these miserable victims of their own sins burst asunder the bars of their prison house, and walk at liberty, at their own will? If so, there is an end of punishment. If not so, then it is true "the reprobate shall be damned do what they can;" "because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened," Rom. i. 21. So much for this "famous consequence;" not because it deserved it, but, if possible, to make respectable Arminians ashamed of it, and to show the youth who are so easily snared in the meshes of this blind religion, the real foundation upon which it is based; and above all, because it has been the prolific father of a thousandfold more infidelity, than all the infidel writers and lecturers that have appeared in the world since the days of Wesley.

§ 7. *It degrades the Almighty to the level of human rulers.*

The degrading assumption that God can do nothing in the world he made, that an earthly king may not justly do towards his subjects; and that God is bound to deal with guilty men in the same way as with the innocent, runs through the whole of Dr. H.'s book, and indeed through all Arminian teachings. Every where it is man dictating to his Maker. Guilty man defying his judge, and insisting upon his own terms with God. The Spirit of God every where characterizes this spirit of man, as a contempt of himself. No language of man can characterize it, as it is set forth in the Scriptures. They verily think God is like themselves. That the thoughts and ways of God should be above theirs, is that which they cannot endure. If God purpose that his "subjects shall act in a certain way," and then "profess dissatisfaction with a very large portion of the actions which he has predetermined; by this principle, the worst hypocrite that ever lived may be fully vindicated." P. 83. If God "predetermine and bring to pass every one of their actions and then punish them," the "Neros, Domitians, Caligulas, and Diocletians" of this world, are "triumphantly vindicated and made honourable." P. 84. All this rant would be well enough, were it not for its *deception*. It takes for granted the very thing to be proved,—that God cannot bring the actions of wicked men to

pass unless he coerce their liberty, or make himself the *efficient* cause and author of those actions. Until Arminians can prove this position, it would be wiser, more modest and more becoming in them, as the subjects of the divine government, to cease this railing.

§ 8. *It utterly rejects God's providential government.*

As the providence of God is the exact accomplishment of his purposes, so a denial of the one is a denial of the other. On this point our author rails after the following manner:—"Another consequence which hangs like a millstone around the neck of this theory" of divine decrees, "and is sufficient of itself, to sink it to the depths," is the fact that it represents God as decreeing that one man should believe, and another deny the Holy Scriptures; the fugitive slave law; the Nebraska and Kansas enactment; and that "men should at one period of their lives preach the gospel, and at another period become infidel lecturers." P. 79. All that I pretend to know on this point is that which God has spoken in his word; and that which I have seen come to pass in my own day. And as for Mr. *Barker*, whom our author evidently had in his mind, it seems to me the most natural thing in the world that an Arminian preacher of the gospel should become an infidel lecturer. It is merely carrying the theory to its logical consequences. For if men deny the providence of God, consistency requires them, also, to deny the word of God.

§ 9. *Theory of Lord Kames.*

But we ask Dr. H. here,—Does one man believe, and another deny the Holy Scriptures; or, did Mr. Barker at one period of his life preach an Arminian gospel and at another become an infidel lecturer, contrary to, or independent of, the purpose of God? Or, has God placed men outside of the jurisdiction of his government? Or, has he withdrawn from his creatures, and left them not only to themselves, but also to control the affairs of this lower world? We need light here. Is man's free will, or fixed laws, or both combined, the cause of all unholy events; or does God sway both these causes in the administration of his most wise and holy government? Lord Kames, a materialist, which is only another word for atheist, maintained, "That natural and moral evil are far from prevailing in the world. Comparing together the moral and material world, every thing is as much the result of ESTABLISHED LAWS in the one as in the other. It is a regular train of causes and effects in the *moral*, as well as in the material world, bringing about events which are comprehended in the *original plan*, and admitting the possibility of none other." "Events do not happen, because they are foreseen, but because they are *certainly* to happen." "There are causes which render the existence of future events certain; therefore, they are capable of being foreseen." It is in this manner only, "that the

Divine Being decrees all future events." It is against this theory, and not Calvinism, as they imagine, that Arminians level their artillery. Its atrocity lies in this fact, that it totally excludes God from the providential government of the world, which he has made. But Calvinism sets God upon the throne above his "established laws;" increasing or diminishing their effects; arresting, counteracting, or diverting, as he will, the operation of established laws. "God is all, and in all." Divine sovereignty says, to every creature, and every fixed law of the universe, hitherto shalt thou come, and here shall thy vain boast terminate. At his command the sea rolls over continents; and at his command it seeks its accustomed channels, or makes new ones for itself. Infinite wisdom, infinite love, and omnipotent power, guiding the free, sovereign and immutable purpose of Jehovah, are the high towers of his people.

But Arminianism arrives, by a different route indeed, at the same conclusion as the materialist. Both the parties plunge from opposite points of the precipice into the same horrid abyss—A WORLD WITHOUT A GOD! "Whom God foreknew, as repenting, and believing, and AVAILING THEMSELVES of remedial provisions, he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son." Thus, while the materialist makes a god of his fixed laws, the Arminian makes a god of the fancied ability of his own dark, polluted, dead soul, to

avail itself of remedial provisions, and by an act of its own inherent power, to give such a degree of efficacy to those remedial provisions as to sway, nay, totally change the sovereign purpose of God. But a changeable god is no God. Therefore, the conclusion is irresistible; materialists worship inanimate and innocent nature, Arminians, animate and guilty nature: the one, inert, irresponsible matter; the other, its own responsible, filthy spirit. We leave the reader to his own reflections and judgment.

CHAPTER VI.

ARMINIAN PREDESTINATION.

§ 1. *Respects characters, not persons.*

PERHAPS the most prominent point of difference between Calvinists and Arminians is, that, the former maintain an election of *persons*; the latter an election of *characters*. This is so obvious to thinking minds, that it must not be overlooked, if we would successfully defend the truth. Dr. H. says: "Whom God foreknew, as repenting, and believing, and availing themselves of remedial provisions, he 'predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son,'—he

hath chosen 'to be holy and without blame before him in love,'" page 108. Then, again, pages 89 and 100, he objects to Calvinism because it involves the consequence, "that man cannot contribute any thing to his personal salvation." Again; "God commands all men every where to repent, and what he requires of men he will enable them to do," page 108. Their views, then, may be stated thus:—God has no right to command any thing from fallen men which they have not ability to do; or if he has, he is also bound to give the necessary ability; so that, in the exercise of their own ability, God, as in duty bound, adding whatever may be necessary, they repent, believe, &c. And, because God foreknew they would do so, he predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son! This is Arminianism, as every where taught by its advocates, and is the predestination of imaginary *characters* that have no existence among men; nor, so far as we know, in any part of the universe. But Calvinists teach the predestination of certain *persons*, who are equally involved in wickedness with all the rest of mankind, to a new *character*. So that they make character the *effect*, while Arminians make it the *cause*, of predestination. Now repentance and faith can never be both the cause and effect of predestination; consequently these two conflicting systems can never be reconciled; and cannot both be from God. God is the enemy of one or the other, and will de-

stroy one or the other. How important then is the knowledge of the truth in regard to this controversy! A controversy, as high above the power of human reason unenlightened by revelation, to settle, as the heavens are high above the earth: but a controversy which the word of God has fully and effectually settled for ever, as we have clearly seen in Chapter III.

§ 2. *It is involved in difficulties and absurdities of the grossest character.*

If Arminianism could be proved true, it would overthrow not merely the sovereignty of God, but carry with it every valuable truth which Arminians themselves hold, and teach, and practise.

1. Man is either able, or not able to obey the requirements of God. If he is able, then divine assistance is unnecessary.

2. Man is either partly able, and needs assistance in part, or he is not. If he possess partial ability, and do not receive assistance, then it can avail him nothing.

3. This supposed partial ability which they call "sufficient grace given to all men," either amounts to a renewed heart, or it does not. If it does, then all men have new hearts, and all must be saved. If it does not, then it can lead neither to faith nor repentance, and is unavailing for either.

4. God either regenerates all men, or some men, or none. If none, then none can be saved,

John iii. 3. If all, then all will be saved. If only some, then he passes by all others, and leaves them to perish in their sins; which must be true, or all are saved, or there is no salvation for any.

5. If God pass by my neighbour B. and regenerate the heart of my neighbour C., the act was just or it was not. If it was just, it was, also, no less just for God to decree from all eternity, that he would do that act, than it was just for him actually to do it, when he did. If it was unjust for him to do the act, it was unjust to decree it, but not otherwise. So that all these blasphemies of Arminianism against Calvinistic predestination, are in fact blasphemies against God, because he pleased to save one sinner and not another.

6. God is, in fact, the real efficient cause of the salvation of such as are finally saved, or he is not. If not, they saved themselves. If he is, then the whole system of Arminianism is a falsehood, and an imposture. But we know that the Lord saves his people. "The Lord hath visited and redeemed his people," Luke i. 68. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins," Matt. i. 21. Hence Paul gives out this challenge to all the Arminians that ever breathed, or peeped,—“Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou, that thou didst not receive? now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?” 1 Cor. iv. 7. This divine

challenge stands unanswered, high above the din of blinded men. It stops the mouth of Arminianism even now, and will close its lips in eternal silence.

If "what God requires of men he will enable them to do," then all men will be saved, for God requires all men to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved; but Arminians tell us truly, that all men are not saved. Consequently those who are lost had ability not to do what God enabled them to do! So, human will is sovereign, and the will of God is man's slave, whether God save or damn him! Those that are saved, save themselves independently of divine power; and those that are lost destroy themselves in defiance of divine power! Did Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, or Nero ever boast more loudly than this?

3. It is baptized infidelity.

Arminianism springs up spontaneously in the human heart, as the effect of the curse, Gal. iii. 10; even as the earth brings forth thorns from the same cause. Calvinism is calumniated because it necessarily involves the consequence, "that man cannot contribute any thing to his own personal salvation," pages 89 and 100. That is, Calvinism necessarily involves a truth taught throughout the entire volume of inspiration! The word of God repeatedly declares in the most explicit terms, "that man cannot contribute any thing to his

own personal salvation," and the same truth is a necessary consequence of Calvinism! Therefore, says Dr. H., Calvinism "furnishes a complete justification of the worst conduct of the worst men that ever lived." And yet, Calvinism is in perfect harmony with the Bible! It is then, according to its own testimony, not Calvinism, but the Bible, against which Arminianism rages. It is not Calvinism, but the teaching of the Bible, "that is worse than the Pagan doctrine of fatalism," p. 101. It "is not Pagan fatalism, it is Christian fatalism. It is fatalism baptized," p. 97. Can Joseph Barker go beyond this? Is not Hodgson as good an Arminian as Barker himself? And are not both these distinguished men perfect embodiments of natural religion, in opposition to that which is supernatural? The natural heart of guilty man abhors divine sovereignty, and will embrace the Bible, only so long as it is able to resist the conviction, that it teaches this doctrine. But when the truth can no longer be resisted, that the Bible does actually teach that man is totally helpless and God absolutely sovereign, Arminianism instantly rejects it as a loathsome thing. It has no other alternative; no refuge except infidelity. Hence, Dr. H. himself says, "Let the opinion become prevalent, that it is a doctrine of the Bible, and as the consequence, the Bible will be rejected by thousands, yea, hundreds of thousands," p. 92. This testimony is true; and the consequence is

established — ARMINIANISM IS BAPTIZED INFIDELITY!

If then, the Bible does actually teach “that man cannot contribute any thing towards his personal salvation,” the conclusion to which we have arrived, is so necessary and complete that no cavil, sophistry, or contradiction can either set it aside or obscure its force. Consequently, all that is required, on this point, is simply to transcribe a very few out of almost innumerable testimonies of the Spirit of God, that if any of the human race are saved, salvation must be wholly the effect of God’s sovereign and efficacious grace; because, “man cannot contribute any thing to his personal salvation.”

1. “In respect to the *understanding*. ‘The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he *know* them, because they are spiritually discerned,’ 1 Cor. ii. 14. ‘There is none that understandeth,’ Rom. iii. 11.— ‘Having the understanding darkened,’ Eph. iv. 18. ‘They have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven images,’ Isaiah xlv. 20. ‘To do good they have no knowledge,’ Jer. iv. 22. ‘Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord,’ Eph. v. 8. ‘The eyes of your understanding being enlightened,’ Eph. i. 18. ‘Then opened he their understanding,’ Luke xxiv. 45. ‘Whose heart the Lord opened,’ Acts xvi. 14. ‘Renewed in knowledge,’ Col. iii. 10. ‘For God, who commanded the light to

shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,' 2 Cor. iv. 6.

2. In respect to the *will*. They say unto God, 'Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways,' Job xxi. 14. 'We will not have this man to reign over us,' Luke xix. 14. 'Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life,' John v. 40. 'Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power,' Psalm cx. 3.

3. In respect to the *affections*. 'How long will ye hate knowledge?' Prov. i. 22. 'I have loved strangers, and after them will I go,' Jer. ii. 25. 'They have loved to wander,' Jer. xiv. 10. 'Sensual,' Jude 19. 'Earthly, sensual, devilish,' James iii. 15. 'Herein is love, NOT that we loved God,' &c., 1 John iv. 10.

4. In respect to the *conscience*. 'Even their conscience is defiled,' Tit. i. 15. 'Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience,' Heb. x. 22.

5. In regard to the desperate wickedness, yea, *total depravity*, of the whole soul, in all its faculties and operations. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,' Rom. viii. 7. 'Every imagination of the thoughts of the heart is only evil continually,' Gen. vi. 5. 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,' Jer. xvii. 9. 'The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the

sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it,' Is. i. 5, 6.

"6. In reference to the natural man's *inability*. Although necessarily to be inferred from the forecited passages, still it is also taught in the most explicit language. 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil,' Jer. xiii. 23. 'You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins,' Eph. ii. 1. 'No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him,' John vi. 44. 'A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit,' Mat. vii. 18. 'The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God,' John v. 25. These, and many similar scriptures, illustrate and give pungency to the words of our Lord:—'Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do,' John viii. 44.

"7. The same truth is still farther confirmed by a consideration of those passages of Scripture in which God declares the work of changing a sinner's heart to be his own prerogative. 'The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live for ever,' Deut. xxx. 6. 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put

within you; I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes,' Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27. 'I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts,' Jer. xxxi. 33. Hence the declaration of our Lord, (Matt. xv. 13,) 'Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.'

"Do these solemn declarations of the Holy Ghost mean only the natural man's own change of purpose? Do they mean no more than that God will *assist* and *succeed* his endeavours? Do they imply *ability* of will commensurate with the divine command,—'Make you a new heart?' Surely, no candid person, solicitous for his own eternal welfare, will maintain the affirmative to any of these questions."

It is only necessary to add here, that the testimonies of man's inability, set forth in these passages of the inspired word, do not affect, in any way, the original and irreversible obligation to obey the commands of God. Man once had ability, he lost it by his crime. And God's law cannot change because man has become a criminal. If it could, then it would be perfectly easy for the sinner to overturn and cast off the divine government.

§ 4. *It is as trifling as it is profane.*

Dr. H., p. 116, pleads innocence, if their doctrine should be false, because, after all, "we are doing nothing but what God has wisely foreor-

dained we should do." Neither did Judas, nor those who shouted, "His blood be on us, and on our children" do any thing but what God wisely foreordained they should do. Have Arminians never read—"They received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believe not the truth?"

It can, however, contribute nothing to the cause of truth, to occupy these pages with all the quibbles, evasions, contradictions, plays upon words, and perversions of the writings of Dr's. Fairchild, Boardman, Musgrave, and others. Besides, those gentlemen are able to defend themselves, if they should judge it necessary or even expedient. Let a single specimen be taken as a sample of the rest, pages 122, 124. Dr. Musgrave had quoted the well known sentiment of Wesley, which will be found in his sermon on "God's Love to fallen Man," in the following words: "Was it not easy for the Almighty to have prevented it (sin)? It was undoubtedly in his power to prevent it; for he hath all power, both in heaven and on earth. But it was known to him, at the same time, that it was best on the whole not to prevent it." Dr. H. denies this, and asserts that Dr. Musgrave "imputes to Mr. Wesley a tenet so perfectly foolish, that it may be doubted whether any man ever advanced it, whether sane or insane, drunk or sober." We judge it would be "perfectly foolish," to follow men who run into such thorn

hedges, to hide themselves from the force of truth. Such things do no good to any cause, much less the cause of Christianity.

§ 5. *It removes no difficulty.*

In a book published at Pittsburgh, in 1838, by Rev. William Annan, entitled "The Difficulties of Arminian Methodism," we find the following, page 80: "Wesley in writing to Dr. Robertson, in answer to the inquiry, 'How is God's foreknowledge consistent with our freedom?' candidly replies, '*I cannot tell.*' (Misc. Works, vol. 3, p. 219.*)" This concession of Wesley is truth. No man can tell. That God purposed not to prevent sin, and consequently to permit it, is a FACT, and yet, we know, he cannot be the author of it. And this is all we know in relation to it. It is a FACT that the purpose of God does not destroy free agency, but establishes it. In regard to these points both theories are equal. It would be strange, indeed, and a denial of the power of God, to suppose that he could not effectually will a free voluntary act in the creature, without making himself the efficient cause of the sinfulness of that act. Such a supposition would truly make the creature a mere automaton. And because human reason cannot explain these facts, Arminians blaspheme the teachings of the Bible, but Calvinists bow to its authority, contented with such light as God is pleased to give.

CHAPTER VII.

FREEDOM OF WILL.

§ 1. *Arminian view absurd.*

THAT the actions of the creatures are fore-known to God, is certain. Arminians themselves confess this truth. But they can no more reconcile the foreknowledge, than the purpose of God, with man's freedom of will. The more profound thinkers among Arminians, with Wesley at their head, honestly confess that they cannot tell how the foreknowledge of God is to be reconciled with our freedom of will. Here Arminianism displays its naked deformity. For, while it confesses the two great truths of divine foreknowledge and freedom of will; and that, neither men nor angels can explain *how* these truths consist in harmony with each other, it ceases not to rail against Calvinism, for maintaining the same truths, which Arminians themselves cannot deny, and of which they never speak unless pushed in controversy. Thus, while the impossibility of explaining either the origin of moral evil, in consistency with divine holiness, or the foreknowledge of God with the free agency of the creature, is not removed, but rather increased, by the Arminian theory they persist in charging upon Calvinism, conse-

quences, which if true, would annihilate their own system. If God foreknew, as they maintain, that sin would come into the world, through or by means of the free agency of the creature, and did not prevent it, it involves the same difficulty as his decree not to prevent it. So that, if this Great Methodist Church of *thirty-one consequences* be right, these consequences are its own, as really, and truly, and to the same extent, that they are the consequences of Calvinism; and Christianity itself is a fable. This deception, practised upon the great mass of mankind who are ignorant, involved in the pursuit of business and pleasure, heedless of their own salvation, and not desiring the knowledge of God, can never be followed with good results of any kind. Arminians generally boast of their system, as adapted to the wants of mankind. No doubt it grows out of the wants of mankind, as does every system of religion, whether true or false; and is no doubt, adapted to their fancied wants. But that it meets those wants can never be conceded. Because it is a natural religion adapted to the depravity of the natural heart, and is founded not upon divine, but human authority. It has cast off the repulsive garb of Romanism, retaining its essential elements,—human authority and human glory, at the expense of divine. Perishing humanity asks for bread, but receives a stone; for a fish, but receives a serpent; for an egg, but receives a scorpion, so far as Arminianism is concerned.

Therefore we condemn Arminianism, because it attempts to fasten the most horrid consequences upon truths which it admits, because it dares not deny them. It does not comport with our present design to follow Arminians through their foolish speculations on the nature of the freedom of the will. President Edwards exposed these follies a century ago, and he has never been successfully answered. To his work, the reader who has time and inclination to investigate Arminian subtleties, is referred. But it may not be out of place to notice how that prince of Arminians, Dr. Adam Clarke, solves the difficulty. He makes a distinction in the universe of *knowable* things; and maintains that God willed not to foreknow the free actions of intelligent moral agents; but willed to foreknow all other things. Clear as mud! Ignorance, or the power to will to be ignorant, a divine attribute, without which it is impossible for God to govern the moral universe! It is believed this specimen will satisfy the minds of ordinary readers concerning Arminian speculations about the freedom of the will.

§ 2. *Dr. Hodgson's view.*

"This theory of predestination is inconsistent with the doctrine of man's free moral agency," page 54. How do you know? Your great teacher Wesley could not solve this question. What evidence can you furnish us that you possess superior ability? When you prove your

assertion, we will renounce Calvinism, join the great Methodist church, and get up a camp-meeting with all convenient speed. Men, who have the Bible in their hands, and are willing to read it and think for themselves, without the influence of interest, or sectarian pride, will never cease to demand three things of Arminianism. *First*, That it prove that God has not taught the doctrine of the predestination of certain *persons* to eternal life. *Secondly*, That he has not also taught the doctrine of man's free agency. And, *thirdly*, that the one doctrine is inconsistent with the other. To deny the consistency of these doctrines with each other, because they *appear to us* to be inconsistent, is about as rational as it is to deny the Copernican system of philosophy, simply because, to us, the sun appears to move round the earth we inhabit. Therefore, when our valiant Arminians who can examine and refute Calvinism with as much ease as they can crush a caterpillar under their feet, have accomplished these three things, Calvinists will surrender at discretion.

Again, says the Dr., "Man is thus reduced to a mere passive instrument. He is nothing more than a complicate and curious machine,—a machine, an automaton, whose every movement is conceived, determined, directed, controlled by a supervisor," page 54. Proof, Dr., proof. We have had assertion upon assertion, *ad nauseam*. Especially are these assertions sickening, as they directly contradict the testimony of the Spirit

of God. "For it is God who worketh in you, (believers,) both to will and to do of his good pleasure," Phil. ii. 13. Are believers, therefore, machines? How do you know that, when God determined beforehand every movement conceived by man, he did not in the same decree, also determine that the sinful conceptions of man should wholly originate in man himself, and be as truly the man's own conceptions as they could have been had no such decree existed? Here again, the Spirit of God testifies one thing, Dr. H. another. "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions," Eccl. vii. 29. This looks very much like Calvinism. And taken in connexion with the declaration, Eph. i. 11, that God "WORKETH ALL THINGS after the counsel of his own will," which Dr. H. has "examined and refuted," seems to some minds to teach, that when God decreed every conception and every act of man, he decreed to put forth his divine power and become the efficient cause of every upright conception and act which proceeds from man; and also decreed that man should, by sufferance, and in the free exercise of his creature power become the efficient cause of every sinful conception and act which proceeds from himself. Come down, Dr., if it should be only for a little pastime, from your high tower of Arminian perfectibility, and learn of Him who is meek and lowly, and see if the words which he spake by his Spirit, are not after all, a little

nearer to right reason than your horrid consequences of Calvinism. Again, we ask, if "every movement" of the creature is not "directed and controlled by a supervisor," what does control the movements of rational creatures? Is man indeed, like the ant, "having no guide, overseer, or ruler?" Prov. vi. 7. Does God exist? If so, to what purpose?

But the following sentence, page 56, which Dr. H. regards with abhorrence, as a consequence of Calvinism, contains more truth than all the rest of his book: "So, according to the teachings of modern Calvinism, man is a free agent, not withstanding all the *circumstances* which *surround* him, with all his *sensations, emotions, desires, purposes, volitions, and acts* were *decreed from eternity*, and brought to pass by a power which he can *neither control, nor resist*." Admirable truth, well expressed. But he continues,—"This free agency must then be something absolutely inviolable in its nature and essence." Certainly, or it would cease to be free agency. "Something which God himself cannot destroy or impinge except by terminating the existence of the being in whom it inheres." Not so fast, Dr., if you please. We cannot follow. May not God destroy the power to *exercise* this free agency, for any good purpose, as in the case of wicked men and devils, without either "terminating their existence, or impinging upon the free agency itself?"

§ 3. *The true doctrine of freedom of will.*

It is well known that the will is a dependent faculty; and can effect nothing beyond the power of the agent who wills, to execute its decisions. It is also well known that the strongest motive determines the will. And if God in his providence, present these motives, as he certainly does, and if the object presented, determine the will, to a sinful course, Arminians infer, that this not only destroys free agency, but necessarily implicates God in the sin. If God "arrange all the circumstances," if "he, by his providence, applies the influence by which the result is effectuated;" "either God is, *strictly and properly* the *author of sin*, or he is a *participant* therein, and not merely accessory, but the *principal*, the *plotter*, the *prime-mover*, the RING-LEADER thereof," page 61. So after all, according to this reasoning, it is not the *decree*, but the *providence* of God that leads to this horrid consequence! If God in his providence, "arranged all the circumstances" which led Achan to find the wedge of gold, or David to see Bathsheba, he was "strictly and properly the author" of Achan's and David's sin! Such is Arminianism. How do you like its features, Dr.? It is your own darling pet. It presents this alternative; if God, in his providence, bring about those events which furnish the opportunity and present the motive, that determines the will to choose sin, he is the author of the sin.

But if, on the other hand, these events occur by chance, or are the result of the operation of fixed laws, then God is excluded from the government of the world which he made. This difficulty leads both Mr. Barker and Dr. H. to reject the providence of God. In the view of both it is a horrid supposition that man should be under the control of a "supervisor," page 54. It also leads Mr. B. to reject the word of God, and Dr. H. to revile Calvinism.

All this confusion and infidelity, or semi-infidelity, arises from a total disregard of one of the plainest truths of revelation, not only in accordance with reason, but so clearly within the grasp of reason, that it may be comprehended at once, and without effort, namely, that the condition or moral state, or inclination of the soul, is more potent in its influence upon the will than any external motive presented in the providence of God can be. Whatever object is presented, it derives its power to determine the will from the state of the soul in which the will inheres. So that motives the most powerful that can be presented to the will, can influence its choice only in proportion as they come in contact with some element of affinity residing within the soul. Satan could not tempt our Lord to sin, because he found nothing in him to act upon, John xiv. 30. So the presentation of the opportunity and object to Joseph by the wife of Potiphar, and to David by Bathsheba, alike in their nature, effected opposite results.

So, when David had the life of Saul in his power, he resisted that temptation. These events prove that motives depend upon the state of the soul for any degree of influence they exert in determining the will. It is to this truth God refers when he puts this interrogatory to the Jews,—“What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?” Is. v. 4. That is, what means capable of influencing the human will could have been adopted, that have not been employed? It is a perversion of this scripture to suppose that God here limits his own omnipotence. For with him all things are possible, except sin. How forcibly do the Scriptures every where establish and illustrate this great truth, that no motives can be found that can exert sufficient influence upon the will to determine its decisions contrary to its internal state and inclination. This fact also demonstrates that whatever is sinful in the volitions and actions of men, must originate in the souls of men. But this fact cannot dethrone God, nor defeat the counsel of his will. He foreknew with infallible certainty every volition and action that would result from the condition of the soul and the motive presented, in case man was left wholly to the freedom of his own will, and he decreed that it should be so; and could, therefore, foretell the conduct of men from the beginning to the end of time, with as much certainty as the events could be recorded after they had occurred. Here is man in his natural

state, when left to himself. Here is seen the truth, that every imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man is evil and only evil. And the reason, also, why the fancied faith and repentance, which Arminians suppose God foresaw in them, is evil and only evil.

This truth is illustrated by numerous examples; especially in the case of Pharaoh, Saul, and the Jewish nation, the crucifiers of our Lord, and the persecutors of his apostles. "That a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. But," what? It does not suit us to yield to indisputable evidence! Here is Arminian freedom of will. And we see that God had nothing more to do to bring to pass all the wickedness that has afflicted the earth, than simply to permit this free will to have full scope, and he knew the results which followed, would infallibly take place, and predicted many of them thousands of years before they occurred. Who can withhold the earnest prayer, "Lord, not my will but thine be done?" Thus all that is holy in this world originates from the free sovereign will of God; all that is unholy from the free will of the creature, and God foreknew what the free will of the creature would accomplish, yet he decreed to give it scope. Consequently, "GOD ORDAINED WHATSOEVER COMES TO PASS;" or Mr. Barker is right.

This view of freedom of will demonstrates with equal certainty the great central truths of

revelation, that God predestinated certain persons to eternal life; and puts forth the secret influence of his omnipotent power in a manner wholly unknown to us, changing their moral nature, and renewing the will to choose that which is good. And that, if any are saved, it must be in this way, because no motive exists in the universe sufficiently powerful to determine the choice of fallen man's will to anything except evil.

A more barefaced contradiction of the word of God cannot even be imagined than the Arminian conceit that the soul of fallen man, in its natural state, has power to will any thing conformable to the will of God. The depravity is so great that it effectually resists any motion of the will to such a choice. Equally vain is their conceit that Christians themselves have any power independent of a supernatural divine influence to execute the good determinations of the will. Besides, the almost innumerable testimonies of the Scriptures upon this point, it is also absurd to plead in prayer for the Holy Spirit to work in us any thing which we have power in ourselves to perform. It is like a man in the possession of all the members of the body in a healthy condition, praying for the removal of a paralysis, that he may have power to walk.

§ 4. *Freedom of will essential to human happiness.*

Freedom of will is no less essential to the happiness of men than it is to constitute them accountable subjects of God's moral government. In the 7th chapter of Romans, the apostle ascribes man's misery to his inability to execute the choice of the will. The will of the natural man does indeed choose only evil, in defiance of any motive that can be presented. And so great is the moral weakness of the renewed soul, that it cannot perform fully and perfectly the good which the will chooses. Hence the suffering of the people of God in this world, so long as their sanctification remains imperfect. The groundless conceit of the Arminians, that Paul speaks of his natural state in that chapter, need not be noticed here, as it has no bearing on the present argument. The essential difference between the righteous and the wicked consists in this. The will of God stands against the will of the wicked; so that when the determinations of their wills have run the length of that sufferance and divine forbearance assigned to them in the purpose of God, in order to demonstrate the abuse of their freedom, their contempt of the divine will, their desperate wickedness, and the justice of their punishment, divine power limits, restrains, controls, guides, and often annihilates their power to execute those determinations of their wills. And this

God does by such means and instruments as he has appointed, or by the immediate exercise of his own power. So, that the punishment of the wicked is not the coercion of their will, but the destruction of their power. In the case of the righteous, their will is ultimately conformed perfectly to the divine will; and power is communicated to them sufficient to execute perfectly the determinations of their wills. In this respect they are as much one with God, as the Father and the Son are one, John xvii. 21. On this point the learned, acute, and pious John Howe, speaks to the admiration of the faithful.

“Liberty, another part of the Divine likeness, wherein we are to imitate God, cannot but be an unspeakable satisfaction. Supposing such a state of the notion of liberty as may render it really a perfection; which otherwise it would be a wickedness to impute to God, and an impossibility to partake from him. I here speak of the moral liberty of a saint, as such; not of the natural liberty of a man, as a man: and of the liberty consummate of saints in glory; not of the inchoate, imperfect liberty of saints on earth. And therefore the intricate controversies about the liberty of the human will lie out of our way, and need not give us any trouble. ’Tis out of question that this liberty consists not (whatever may be said of any other) in an equal propension to good or evil; nor in the will’s independency on the practical understanding; nor in a various uncertain mutability, or

inconstancy; nor is it such as is opposed to all necessity; 'tis not a liberty from the government of God,* nor from a determination to the simply best and most eligible objects. But it is a liberty from the servitude of sin, from the seduction of a misguided judgment, and the allurements of any insnaring forbidden object: consisting in an unbounded amplitude and enlargement of soul towards God, and indetermination to any inferior good: resulting† from an entire subjection to the Divine will, a submission to the order of God, and steady adherence to him. And unto which the many descriptions and eulogies agree most indisputably, which from sundry authors are congested together by Gibieuf, in that ingenious tractate of liberty. As that, He is free that lives as he will (from Cicero, insisted on by S. Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. 14, c. 25)—*i. e.* who neither wishes any thing, nor fears any thing; who in all things acquiesces in the will of God; who minds nothing but his own things, and accounts nothing his own but God; who favours nothing but God; who is moved only by the will of God. Again; He is free, that cannot be hindered, being willing, nor forced, being unwilling (from Epictetus)—*i. e.*

* Which is a no more desirable state than that which I remember, the historian tells us was the condition of the Arminians; who, having cast off the government that was over them, became Incerti, solutique, et magis sine Domino quam in libertate. Tacit. Ann. 1, 2.

† Libertas nostra non est subjectio ad Deum formaliter, sed amplitudo consequens eam. Gibieuf. De libert. Dei et creaturæ, lib. 1, c. 35.

who hath always his will; as having perfectly subjected it to the will of God, as the same author explains himself. Again; He is free that is master of himself (from the Civilians) *i. e.* (as that liberty respects the spirit of a man) that hath a mind independent on any thing foreign and alien to himself. That only follows God (from Philo Judæus;) That lives according to his own reason (from Aristotle:) with many more of like import; that alone does fully and perfectly suit that state of liberty the blessed soul shall hereafter eternally enjoy; as that author often acknowledges.

This is the glorious liberty of the children of God; the liberty wherewith the Son makes free. Liberty, indeed, measured and regulated by the royal law of liberty, and which is perfected only in a perfect conformity thereto. There is a most servile* liberty, a being† free from righteousness, which under that specious name and show,‡ enslaves a man to corruption: and there is as free a service, by which a man is still the more free, by how much the more he serves, and is subject to his superior's will, and governing influences; and by how much the less possible it is, he should swerve therefrom.§ The

* Quam invexere sibi, adjuvant servitutem. Et sunt, quodammodo, propriâ Libertate captivi. Boeth. ex Gib. Nectit quâ valeat trahi catenam. Sen. Trag.

† Rom. vi. 20.

‡ 2 Pet. ii.

§ Liberior quò divinæ gratiæ subjector. Primum Liberum arbitrium, quod homini datum est, quando primum

nearest approaches therefore of the soul to God; its most intimate union with him, and entire subjection to him in its glorified state, makes its liberty consummate. Now is its deliverance complete, its bands are fallen off; 'tis perfectly disentangled from all the snares of death, in which it was formerly held; 'tis under no restraints, oppressed by no weights, held down by no clogs; it hath free exercise of all its powers; hath every faculty and affection at command. How unconceivable a pleasure is this! With what delight doth the poor prisoner entertain himself, when his manacles and fetters are knocked off! when he is enlarged from his loathsome dungeon, and the house of his bondage; breathes in a fresh air; can dispose of himself, and walk at liberty whither he will! The bird escaped from his cage, or freed from his lime and stone, that resisted its vain and too feeble strugglings before; how pleasantly doth it range! with what joy doth it clap its wings, and take its flight! A faint emblem of joy, where-with that pleasant cheerful note shall one day be sung and chanted forth. 'Our soul is escaped, as a bird out of the snare of the fowler; the snare is broken, and we are escaped.' There is now no place for such a complaint, I would, but I cannot; I would turn my thoughts to glorious objects, but I cannot. The blessed soul feels

creatus est rectus, potuit non peccare; sed potuit et peccare. Hoc autem novissimum eò potentius erit, quo peccare non potuit. Aug. de Civitat. Dei, lib. 22, c. 30.

itself free from all confinement: nothing resists its will, as its will doth never resist the will of God. It knows no limits, no restraints; is not tied up to this or that particular good; but expatiates freely in the immense, universal, all-comprehending goodness of God himself. And this liberty is the perfect image and likeness of the liberty of God, especially in its consummate state. In its progress towards it, it increases as the soul draws near to God: which nearer approach is not in respect of place or local nearness, but likeness and conformity to him: in respect whereof, as God is most sublime and excellent in himself, so is it in him. Its consummate liberty is, when it is so fully transformed into that likeness of God, as that he is all to it, as to himself: so that as he is an infinite satisfaction to himself; his likeness in this respect is the very satisfaction itself of the blessed soul".—*Howe's Works*, pp. 216, 217.

CHAPTER VIII.

UNITY OF THE DIVINE WILL.

§ 1. *Arminian View.*

THE numerous Arminian consequences of Calvinism have been resolved into two; its supposed

inconsistency with the free agency of the creature, and the preceptive will of God. If these two consequences be successfully demolished, the entire system falls. The first has been shown to be an inference from undeniable *facts*, that God is sovereign and man free; a denial of the former is equivalent to a denial of the being of God; a denial of the latter is equivalent to a denial that man is an accountable creature. In regard to the preceptive will of God, Dr. H. says, a consequence of the Calvinistic theory "is, that God has two hostile wills, in relation to the same thing—his decrees, and his published commands and prohibitions. He has enjoined certain modes of action, by the most solemn legislation, and yet decreed, from all eternity, that multitudes of those whom he has subjected to those obligations, shall constantly act at variance therewith; so that multitudes of human beings are doing his will perfectly, and yet violating his will at the same time." P. 74. Here, again, we have the same fallacy that constitutes the essence of every one of these famous Arminian consequences, namely, that if God has "decreed, that multitudes shall constantly act at variance" with his "commands and prohibitions," then he must have "two hostile wills." This consequence supposes *first*, that, if God decree that the sinful acts of the wicked shall come to pass, he must be both the author and efficient cause of those wicked acts. But we have seen in the preceding

chapters, especially in the fourth, that God decreed that wicked actions should come to pass by the free agency and efficiency of the transgressor himself: *Secondly*, that the divine law has no penalty annexed; and it is evident that Dr. H. omitted to mention the penalty of the law, lest it should lead his reader to perceive the sophistry of his argument. He says, "his published commandments and prohibitions." But why did he not add to his definition of the divine law the *penalty* annexed, in case of disobedience? Obviously, because it would have spoiled his consequence. We shall attempt in this chapter, to illustrate these two points, in conjunction, as their logical connexion is inseparable, the *first* depending upon the truth of the second.

§ 2. *Arminianism ignores the penalty of the law.*

Law, without a penalty, is a nullity. Neither divine nor human government can exist without both the right and power to punish disobedience. The purpose of God in all his decrees was either to secure obedience, or punish disobedience, and the providence of God is the exact accomplishment of this purpose. And the law of God commands obedience, and threatens the penalty in case of disobedience, which penalty is inflicted in the providence of God. So that a more complete harmony cannot even be imagined between any two things in the universe capable of being con-

sidered distinctly from each other, than exists between the decrees and commands of God, according to the Calvinistic theory. This truth is so palpable, that Arminianism would be the strangest anomaly on earth, were it not for the well known fact, that men who are philosophers in reference to natural things, invariably, and every where, whether in Pagan or Christian lands, reason like maniacs upon religious subjects, till renewed by the Spirit of God. An ever present, all-pervading Jehovah, working "ALL THINGS after the counsel of his own will," covering with the shield of his own omnipotence the chosen vessels of his mercy, and consuming with unquenchable fire his enemies, are sublime truths, which the world can neither receive nor endure, because it is under the dominion of the god of this world. The world neither knows, nor will know any alternative between fatalism on the one hand, and atheism on the other. The serpent's hiss, the lion's roar, the respiration of every living thing, are not more spontaneous, than that inherent unconquerable desire of every natural heart to escape the omniscience of Jehovah. "No God." Ps. xiv. 1. Fixed laws must be supreme, or no laws can exist; the human soul must be supreme, or there can be no human soul; it is a machine, at least, if God act *above* the law he has given to men, and *above* the capacity of the sinner, however consistent with both his action may be, he has a contradictory will.

Second causes and means must possess inherent efficacy in themselves, or become useless; God cannot work by any instrument which has no efficacy in itself to accomplish the work he is pleased to perform by it; and God cannot employ one wicked man to do a wicked act according to his own nature and disposition, for the just punishment of another wicked man, without being both the author of that wicked act, and the violator of his own law which commands all men to abstain from every species of sin. Such is the religion of this world, and such is Arminianism.

“This truth, philosophy, though eagle-eyed
In nature’s tendencies, oft overlooks;
And having found his *instrument*, forgets,
Or disregards, or, more presumptuous still,
Denies the *power* that wields it.”

But the *fact* that God does employ wicked men and angels to perform wicked works, contrary to the commands of his law, for the punishment of other wicked men, and for the chastisement of his own people, is established beyond all controversy, by almost innumerable examples in the Scriptures. The crucifixion of our Lord for the expiation of the sins of his people, is an example beyond the power of sophistry to evade. The historical record in the tenth chapter of Isaiah, is equally conclusive. “O Assyrian! the rod of mine anger. I WILL SEND HIM against a hypocritical nation, and against the people of

my wrath will I give him a charge," v. 5, 6. And when he had accomplished his decreed work by that monarch, he punishes him for the wickedness he committed in the performance of the work which God sent him to perform, v. 12, 13. Was God, therefore, either the author of that monarch's wickedness, or did it prove that God has two contradictory wills, because he sent that man to visit with fire and sword a neighbouring nation, contrary to that great command of his law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself?" Arminianism answers in the affirmative. Consequently, there is no alternative, there can be none, between a renunciation of Arminianism, and a renunciation of the Bible, as a revelation from God! No marvel that it can *refute* Calvinism without an examination of "proof texts!" But Calvinism sees, in such examples, the purpose of God to employ wicked men in works suitable to their own nature, which those wicked men had voluntarily chosen for the accomplishment of schemes which they had conceived in their own hearts. God had his own purpose in sending the man; the man had, also, his own purpose in going, according to his own will. The purposes of God and of the man were totally different in the same action. And the intention of mind in the parties marked the moral character of the action. Hence this monarch said, "By the strength of *my* hand I have done it, and by *my* wisdom." But God says, "I will send him,"

and then adds, "I will punish the FRUIT of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." The cruel, horrid war which this monarch prosecuted against the Jews, was the *fruit* of his own stout heart, yet God decreed, and caused that war to come to pass as he does every other thing that occurs in the universe which he created, and over which he reigns in majesty and glory ineffable. Let every man, let the world of mankind, ponder this solemn truth, that both the decrees and commands of God are in unison; both, like mountains of brass, stand eternally against the transgressor. When a man disobeys, or even acts without a supreme regard to the commands of God, he is in reality acting according to both the decree and preceptive will of God, as truly as when he is yielding obedience to those commands. He has simply stepped out of the protection of the law and placed himself under its penalty. In the one case the gospel becomes a savour of life unto life; in the other, a savour of death; and in both cases the law is magnified, and God is glorified, Is. xlix. 5.

This explains the whole mystery! The change is in the transgressor; neither in God, nor in his decrees, nor in his commands. This stepping out of the protection of the law under its penalty, was what Adam did, in the exercise of his own free will, and God decreed it should be so. And from that day to this man's free will has done the same thing, and nothing else. All Christians

are brought to see this truth before they are taken out of this world. The enemies of God learn it for the first time when they awake in hell. O, that they were wise! Lord, open their eyes! Save, lest they perish, for there is no help either in man's ability, or freedom of will.

The same truth is illustrated in 1 Sam. xvi. 14; 2 Sam. xxiv. 1; 1 Kings xxii. 20, 23; 1 Chron. xxi. 1; Ezek. xiv. 9, and in many other places. The reader can consult those passages for himself. The evil spirit sent from the Lord, the blinding the minds, hardening the hearts of men, spoken of in the scriptures; causing prophets to be deceived, and sending false prophets out into the world, are easily explained and understood, on the well known principles of the divine government as we have applied those principles to the case of the Assyrian monarch. But on no other principle can they either be explained, or the cavils of infidelity answered.

§ 3. *God's refusal to prevent sin, no evidence that he wills it.*

Many passages of scripture, such as Ps. lxxxi. 13, "O that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways," clearly teach that God wills not the sin and misery of his creature man. His will is that they should be saved. The gift and the offer of Christ to mankind sinners is sincere, the call to believe in him earnest, and the command to do so impe-

rative. This fact is not a contradiction of his purpose, or decree. It only shows that his purpose, or decree, to give the sinner that is lost, the free exercise of his will, and to punish his disobedience, is a proof that sin is against his will, and of the earnestness of his will, that the sinner should submit to his will and be saved. The utmost that can be inferred is, after all, simply that God willed not to put forth his supernatural power in every instance to prevent sin and its consequences. "And, therefore," says Howe, "it is unavoidably imposed upon us, to believe that God is truly unwilling of some things, which he doth not think fit to interpose his omnipotency to hinder, and is truly willing of some things, which he doth not put forth his omnipotency to effect. That he most fitly makes this the ordinary course of his dispensations towards men, to govern them by laws, and promises, and threatenings, (made most express to them that live under the gospel,) to work upon their minds, their hope, and their fear; affording them the ordinary assistances of supernatural light and influence, with which he requires them to comply, and which, upon their refusing to do so, he may most righteously withhold, and give them the victory to their own ruin; though oftentimes he doth, from a sovereignty of grace, put forth that greater power upon others, equally negligent and obstinate, not to enforce, but effectually to incline,

their wills, and gain a victory over them, to their salvation.

“Nor is his will towards the rest altogether ineffectual, though it have not this effect. For whosoever thou art that livest under the Gospel, though thou dost not know that God so wills thy conversion and salvation, as to effect it, whatsoever resistance thou now makest; though thou art not sure he will finally overcome all thy resistance, and pluck thee as a firebrand out of the mouth of hell; yet thou canst not say his good will towards thee hath been without any effect at all tending thereto. He hath often called upon thee in his Gospel to repent and turn to him through Christ; he hath waited on thee with long patience, and given thee time and space for repentance; he hath within that time been often at work with thy soul. Hath he not many times let in beams of light upon thee? shown thee the evil of thy ways? convinced thee? awakened thee? half persuaded thee? and thou never hadst reason to doubt, but that if thou hadst set thyself with serious diligence to work out thy own salvation, he would have wrought on, so as to have brought things to a blessed issue.”
Howe’s Works, page 446.

“And as to this, if indeed that modesty and reverence were every where to be found, wherewith it would become dim-sighted man to judge of the ways of God, any inquiry of this kind might be forborne; and it would be enough to

put us out of doubt, that this was the most equal and fittest way, that we see it is the way which God hath taken. But that cross temper hath found much place in the world, rather to dispute God's methods than comport with them, in an obedient thankful compliance and subserviency to their intended ends. And how deeply is it to be resented, that so momentous a thing in the religion of Christians, and that above all other should be the subject and incentive of admiring, devout thoughts and affections, should ever have been made intricate and perplexed by disputation! That the food of life should have been filled with thorns and gravel! And what was most apt to beget good blood, and turn all to strength, vigour, and spirit, should be rendered the matter of a disease! This can never enough be taken to heart. What complaints might the tortured, famished church of Christ send up against the ill instruments of so great a mischief! 'Lord! we asked bread, and they gave us a stone. They have spoiled the provisions of thy house. Our pleasantest fare, most delicious and strengthening viands, they have made tasteless and unsavoury.' What expostulations might it use with them! 'Will you not let us live? Can nothing in our religion be so sacred, so important, as to escape your perverting hands?'" Ib. page 85.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CAUSE OF ARMINIANISM.

§ 1. *The fall of man, not the purpose of God, must be the cause.*

ARMINIANISM seems to be the necessary consequence of the condition into which the fall of Adam plunged mankind. If this be so, the importance of thoroughly studying this system, in all its phases, ramifications, bearings, and ultimate results, can scarcely be over estimated. And in the prosecution of this study, the word of God is our only guide. The light of human science, and the mightiest efforts of reason are no less inadequate to dispel the moral darkness of this system, than is the glow-worm to supply the place of the sun in the visible heavens. The only remedy, is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ. The dignity and honour of man as he came from the hand of his Maker, were great. His soul possessed both the natural and moral image of God. The plunge he made into the fearful abyss of transgression did not destroy, but deranged and paralyzed the power of his faculties to any thing good. The moral image of God was totally lost. He *was* the friend, but *is now* the enemy of God.

His relation both to God and his law was totally changed. Both the law and purpose of God stand naturally and necessarily against him. And the predestination of a portion to eternal life was simply a supernatural provision in conformity to law, because it provided for even a more perfect and glorious vindication of the law, in their case, than in the case of those who were left in the condition into which sin had plunged them.

The faculties of the soul remaining, together with conscience, in a polluted and benumbed state, alarms the sinner, and when his mind is brought in contact with divine revelation, a greater or less degree of truth flashes upon the intellectual faculties, and this truth operating upon the natural conscience, convinces of sin; presents God before the mind as an enemy, and necessarily impels it to seek a remedy. Being ignorant of the one only remedy presented in the gospel, the poor soul hides itself from God, wanders farther and farther in pursuit of relief, through millions of devices, to no purpose. How forcible the declaration of the Spirit,—“They have sought out many inventions!” Hence, all the idolatries in pagan and popish lands, and all the human devices, erroneous doctrines and unauthorized forms of worship in protestant countries. These things are the pangs and struggles of suffering nature in its impotent efforts to accomplish a supernatural work; a work which God only can perform, which he has

performed ; but which blinded nature neither will, nor can see. But this supernatural power, which provided salvation for guilty men, is put forth in its application to all those whom God has predestinated to salvation, and it alone can renew them.

Arminianism then, with all its results, seems to arise necessarily out of man's miserable condition, as an enemy of God, destitute of the knowledge of God, without hope in God ; the mind resorts to such remedies as lie within its reach, and appear most plausible to reason. The actions of men, not their words, demonstrate their character. The example of Adam when he perceived his condition as a sinner, is most impressive, and deeply affecting,—“I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked ; and I hid myself.” From that day to this the human race have been treading in the footsteps of their progenitor and covenant head. They hide themselves from God, because the more they know of him, without an apprehension of his mercy in Christ Jesus, the more they are compelled to regard him as an enemy whose power they can neither evade nor resist.

§ 2. *The stubbornness of man's will.*

The most deplorable, perhaps, of all the effects of the apostacy, when viewed, as it should be, in connexion with the gospel remedy, is the

stubbornness of the human will to resist that remedy. Freedom of will in the human soul is as indestructible as the existence of the soul itself. Take from it free will, it not only becomes a different creature from what it is, but is removed out of the jurisdiction of God's moral government. Dr. H. justly regards this truth as a necessary consequence of Calvinism. This explains fully the *fact*, that no coercion of man's free will takes place under the divine government, either in the salvation of the righteous, or the punishment of the wicked; and, also, sheds a flood of light upon the gospel call and every thing connected with it. In a state of innocence the free choice of the will harmonized perfectly with the divine will. The first sinful volition of man reversed this order. So that the constant choice of the human will stands in the most determined, inveterate and eternal hostility to God, unless it be renewed by a supernatural divine influence. This explains both the providence of God, and the past history of mankind. God has set up his eternal Son King of kings, Lord of lords. But the world will not have this man to reign over them. No means CAN BE devised, consistent with the inviolability of this freedom of will, that can influence it to choose God, either as its Sovereign, or Teacher, or Lawgiver, or Redeemer. They have said, "There is no hope: no; for we have loved strangers and after them will we go," Jer. ii. 25. But, says

God,—“Ye shall BEAR THE SINS of your idols,” Ezek. xxiii. 49. Of every apostatizing church he says,—“Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone,” Hosea iv. 17. But of his people, God says,—“From all your idols will I cleanse you,” Ezek. xxxvi. 25. And they respond to God,—“What have I to do any more with idols?” Hosea xiv. 8.

Here we may, if we will, see the cause of absolute monarchies, wars, and oppression in the state; and ecclesiastical tyranny and persecution, as it exists in the church of Rome. Also, the cause of reliance upon the efficacy of means, and religious ceremonies, such as the mass, pilgrimages, penances, prayers to saints, &c., in the Romish church; baptismal regeneration in the Episcopal; camp-meetings, confusion, and clamour in the Methodist Episcopal church; and every species of man’s devices in every part of the church, wherever they are found. All these things are based on the supposition that the will can be influenced to its determinations by motives, irrespective of an *effectual* supernatural influence, causing the mind to perceive that obedience to the will of God is the strongest motive. And if this supposition were true, the means which God has appointed would be sufficient for the salvation of men, without this supernatural efficacy. Hence, the remarkable facts, that, ancient Pelagianism, which embodied the essential element of modern Arminianism, preceded,

and was the most potent cause of Romish superstitions; that Arminianism cursed Christianity, in the council of Trent, in the sixteenth century; hatched a new brood in the church of England in the eighteenth century, and brought forth Puseyism in the nineteenth. Nor is this all. It brought forth transcendentalism in Germany; rationalism in Geneva; despotism in republican Switzerland; paralysis in Holland; Universalism, in New England; and would, at this moment, if its power were equal to its will, destroy every vestige of the attainments made by the Christian church at the period of the Reformation.

§ 3. *Its supposed adaptation to the condition of sinners.*

This is certainly a strong hold of Arminianism. The general opinion is, that Calvinism shuts the door of hope in the face of the outcast, perishing sinner, who would, if he could, escape his impending doom. Some Calvinists, especially of the Dr. Gill school, by whose delusions the writer of these pages, was at one period of life, greatly perplexed, though never a believer in his theory, —teach that the gospel call is only made to “sensible sinners,” or the election of grace. Others, with sounder views, among whom the writer pleads guilty, are in danger of using language, or metaphors that have a tendency to foster this delusion. We sometimes hear the doctrine of election com-

pared to the cloud which separated the Israelites from the Egyptians at the Red Sea,—light to the people of God, darkness to sinners. It is darkness to sinners, only when regarded as a rule of duty; or when they have become indifferent to the commands of God, or placed themselves in open rebellion. In such cases it is truly a dark cloud to every transgressor. But to the inquiring sinner, who has any proper concern for his salvation, it presents an aspect no less brilliant, than to the believer. It is either weakness, ignorance, or inattention, that prevents our perception of this great truth. For, although the purpose of God to save his people is secret, it is so, only in reference to the particular individuals elected to salvation. Their names are not recorded in the revelation of the doctrine. And although this purpose of God is not a rule of duty, it points with an emphasis that cannot be mistaken to the only source from whence strength can be derived, necessary for the performance of duty. While the Son of God cries from the cross to a world of perishing sinners,—“Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved; for I am God: and besides me there is no Saviour;” the decree of election from the throne of the everlasting Father accompanies this merciful call with the certification that a portion of the human family are chosen to everlasting life in this my beloved Son. Hear ye him. Obey his call; and whosoever among you will do so,

he shall know the truth of the doctrine. It is both the decretive and preceptive will of God that men shall obey the great commandment of the Gospel, to believe in the Son, as the means, and the only means, by which they ever can know their election of God. Those who do believe in obedience to this command may know, and do generally know even in this life, that they belong to the number of his chosen people. And those who disobey the command may know, and often do know, in this life, that they belong to the number of the reprobate. Both classes know that, both the decree is fulfilled, and the law vindicated in themselves. The one by receiving the decreed reward of obedience, the other the decreed reward of disobedience. The former class obtain their knowledge by their faith; the latter by their unbelief. Thus the truth is demonstrated that it is both the *command* and *purpose* of God, that, "he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Where now is the fancied Arminian contradiction between the decree and command of God? There is a distinction; the two things are not one thing; but there is NO CONTRADICTION.

§ 4. *The love of power.*

If the view of the preceding section be correct, it will be seen that the unconquerable love of

power in the human mind is no slight cause of Arminianism. Whenever the opportunity is presented, it invariably assumes the form of a despotism in the state, and a hierarchy in the church. The Arminian notion of free will, leads to the free exercise of power to the full extent of ability and opportunity, without any proper regard to a higher will, or higher law. The few exceptions to this general tendency of the principle, cannot shake the solid basis upon which it rests. So, the idea of the efficacy of means contributes to this unlawful exercise of free will. Hence, unauthorized institutions and lawless power, have hitherto, with few exceptions, characterized both the civil and ecclesiastical institutions of the world. Human will takes the place of the divine, and human despotism, the place of that liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free. If God has lodged with men any system of means, which if rightly used, can accomplish the end designed, then, the people with whom such means are lodged, have an impregnable fortress of Romanism, whether they should avail themselves of it or not. The ancient monarchies and republics did as their own will determined. The seven churches of Asia imitated their example, and where are they? Modern governments and churches to a greater or less extent, are doing the same thing, and, of course, the result cannot be different. Calvinism carries out the divine declaration,

“Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.”

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

IN the course of the preceding inquiry, viewed in connexion with the arrangements of the covenants of Works and of Grace, which of course could not be directly noticed, the writer has arrived at the following results, some of which have brought to his own mind a more clear and satisfactory view of Calvinistic doctrines than had been before attained. It is not, however, presumed nor supposed that any truth has been discovered, not well known to those who have investigated the Arminian system.

1. The essential element of Arminianism is atheism. Although I have occasionally considered the prominent tenets of Arminians for more than thirty years, the assertion of this conclusion would have startled me and called forth a denial, before the examination of Dr. H's. book.

2. Although all the purposes of God are one eternal act of the divine mind, incapable of

consideration apart from divine foreknowledge; yet our weak apprehension renders it necessary to make a distinction between foreknowledge and decrees; and to regard some decrees, such as the creation of the world and reprobation as subsequent in the order of nature to foreknowledge; and others, such as the predestination of certain PERSONS to eternal life, as antecedent to the foreknowledge of those persons as the elect. This fact is too palpable to be denied by even Arminians. Thus, the foreknowledge of both the elect and non-elect as alike inveterate enemies of God, and every *possible* "remedial provision" that could be devised, not excepting the Father's gift of his beloved Son, is antecedent in the order of nature to the purpose of election, as Calvinists understand it. May not this be the reason why the apostle, Rom. viii. 22, places foreknowledge before predestination? That is, "whom he foreknew" as perishing sinners, and also as the objects of his everlasting love, "he also did predestinate," &c.

3. If the foregoing conclusion be correct, and I see no flaw in it, it sheds no insignificant light upon that agitating controversy, the extent of the atonement; and establishes the reality, and sincerity, and perfection of the gospel offer, or gift of Christ to mankind as sinners; and fully justifies the severe condemnation pronounced upon the despisers of the gospel. For,

(1.) If we regard the election of certain *persons*

in Christ, as subsequent in the order of nature to the foreknowledge of all mankind, as certain despisers and rejecters of Christ, no power of sophistry can make the purpose of election any bar in the way of the free and full offer of the gospel to all mankind sinners, as such; or the least shadow of excuse for their rejection of Christ.

(2.) It also points out very clearly wherein the atonement of Christ is definite, and wherein it is also indefinite; and shows that much sharp controversy on this point has arisen from the position in which the parties stood, when viewing this divine and most stupendous of all mysteries exhibited in the revelation of the grace of God to men. In regard to its own nature and value; to the relation in which the person who made it stood, both to God and all mankind; to the relation which all mankind sustain to the law of God; to the commission given to the ministers of Christ; to the essential mercy of God; to the earnest desire of God that men should be conformed to his law by obedience and be happy, rather than they should suffer its endless penalty; and to the obligation of gospel hearers, the atonement has no limit. But, in regard to the substitution of Christ in the place of his people, a provision absolutely necessary to prevent his atonement from becoming a perfect nullity to mankind; and in regard to the secret purpose of God, and the de-

sign of Christ in his death, the atonement is both definite and limited. And this limitation has no bearing whatever either upon its value, or the universal offer of the Gospel. It resolves itself into, and is inseparable from the purpose of God to save a portion, and not all the human family. The reader will perceive we have as little sympathy with the advocates of a *numerical* as of an *Arminian* atonement. It is numerical in regard only to the purpose of God in the *substitution* of Christ, and the application of the benefits of his purchase. Predestination to life should be viewed as the purpose of God to apply the benefits of the atonement to a portion of mankind sinners, that it might not be a nullity.

4. The Calvinistic system is in fact the only system that holds out the least ray of hope to perishing sinners. It presents Christ in the gospel offer as bringing with him the graces of regeneration, faith, and repentance, and every thing necessary for the salvation of sinners. The command to believe in Christ comes linked with the promise of all things. The command to receive him, is a command to receive him as the trustee and administrator of all saving blessings which are lodged in him. Christ comes in all the stern majesty of the Godhead, commanding a reception of himself on pain of death, and in all the meekness of that blessed Lamb who takes away the sins of the world. He brings the law which cries aloud with all the terrors

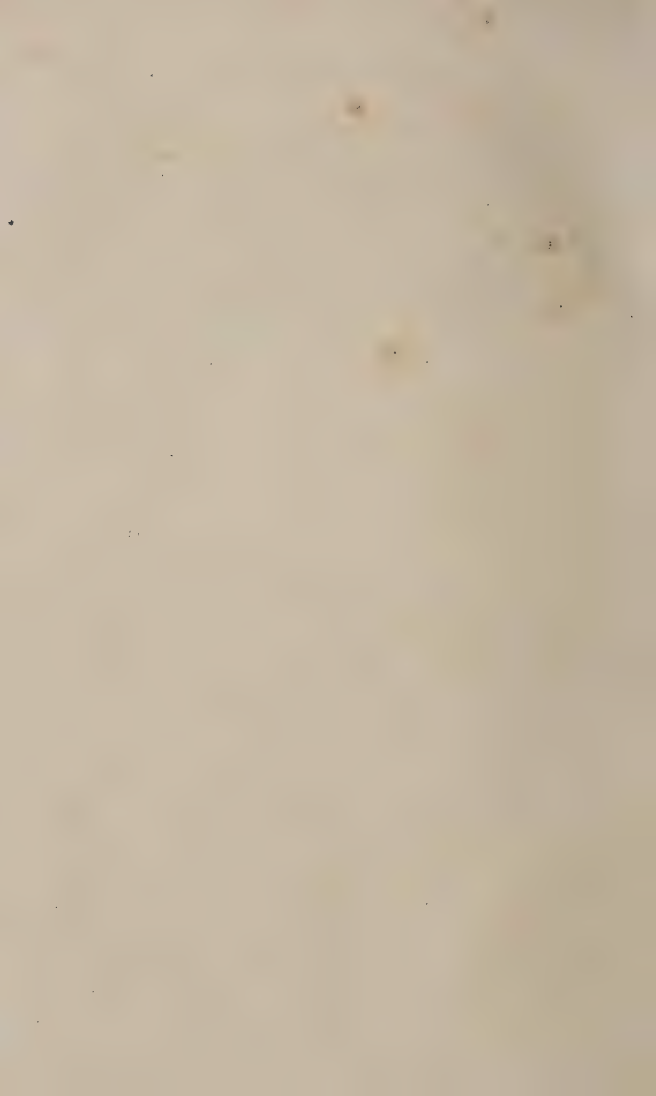
of Sinai—"Make you a new heart;" but this stern command is both prefaced and heralded with the promise—"A new heart will I give you." With the one hand he points to the terrific penalty of the law—"The soul that sinneth it shall die;"—with the other, he points to the blood flowing from his pierced side, which cleanses from all sin.

5. Obedience to the command to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is the key which unlocks the arcana of both the decrees and commands of God. They that believe shall know their election of God; and they that believe not shall know their reprobation of God. Faith is not the *cause* of election, but is the *means* by which we come to the knowledge of the fact. We recommend Arminians to study diligently and prayerfully the 73d Psalm. It will inform them, if not of the *reason*, at least of the *righteousness* of God in decreeing that the Nebraska iniquity, and every other iniquity should come to pass; and also that his people should escape from every species of iniquity.

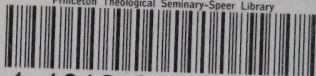
6. The law which commands obedience is in the hand of Christ linked to the promise. What God has joined, let no man put asunder. The sinner cannot receive divine grace without obedience to the law; neither can he obey the law without divine grace. In Christ he obtains both. Out of Christ his inheritance is divine wrath. Happy, beyond expression or thought,

are they, who can say, in truth, of this divine Saviour—"My beloved is mine and I am his." Miserable, beyond expression or thought, are they, who are looking to their own repentance and faith and employment, "of remedial provisions," as qualifications necessary for the reception of Christ, or as the cause of their predestination to eternal life.

THE END.



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